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ANALYSIS OF RECRUITER REFRESHER TRAINING FOR THE U.S. NAVY

by

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March 2012

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This thesis analyzes the training continuum for Navy recruiters coming from the fleet. Specifically, the study examines the current training pipeline and the theories of how people learn, why they learn, and how they retain information. The study focuses on the uniqueness of recruiting assignments, recruiter training requirements, the 2011 recruiting environment, the Navy Recruiting Command organization, and the influence of incentives on recruiting performance. The training cycle for the main selling tool, Professional Selling Skills, is analyzed based on elements of learning, forgetting, and motivation. The purpose is to strengthen the training continuum and help mitigate potential recruiting difficulties in the years ahead. The primary sources of information are Navy Recruiting Command Instructions and basic learning and motivational theories. This study suggests ways to support the training continuum by ensuring that recruiters are provided with standardized and comprehensive training throughout their recruiting tour. Periodic refresher training would ultimately boost individual recruiter productivity as well as strengthen on-the-job training. In addition to reinforced training, new motivational factors and incentives can augment the training continuum. Recommendations are provided to improve the current training continuum with recruiting simulators and enhanced incentives.

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LIST OF ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

ACR	Assistant Chief Recruiter
CO	Commanding Officer
COM	Navy Commendation Medal
CR	Chief Recruiter
CRF	Career Recruiting Force
EACR	Enlisted Assistant Chief Recruiter
ERIS	Enlisted Recruiter Incentive System
DIVO	Division Officer
DLCPO	Division Leading Chief Petty Officer
LPO	Leading Petty Officer
NAM	Navy Achievement Medal
NEC	Navy Enlistment Classification Code
NORU	Navy Orientation Recruiting Unit
NRC	Navy Recruiter Command
NRD	Navy Recruiting District
NRS	Navy Recruiting Station
NRST	Navy Recruiting Simulation Tool
OACR	Officer Assistant Chief Recruiter
PPR	Production Per Recruiter
PSS	Professional Selling Skills
PSC	Professional Selling Coaching
RCAP	Recruiter Command Advancement Program
REB	Recruiter Evaluation Board
RINC	Recruiter in Charge
ROY	Recruiter of the Year
RRT	Recruiter Refresher Training
SDAP	Special Duty Assignment Pay

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For Rebekah: always for Rebekah.

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I.   INTRODUCTION

Since the beginning of the All-Volunteer Force in 1973, Navy recruiting has been influenced to a great extent by both external and internal factors, many of which operate independently (Carden, 2008). Although Navy recruiting has prospered throughout most years of the modern era, the positive impact brought by the economic collapse in 2008 was unprecedented (Tyson, 2009). History demonstrates quite clearly that the military's recruiting environment will change at some point in the not-too-distant future, perhaps weakened by an improving economy, or by government austerity, or by declining youth propensity to enlist, or by some other shift among the factors that have been so kind to recruiting over the past several years. Simply stated, the Navy's recruiting force of today needs to be prepared and capable to handle tomorrow's challenges.

While the recruiting upturn allows the military to build a highly qualified and capable force, it is also provides an opportunity to analyze recruiting policies for their continued effectiveness and value. The last time the Navy missed its recruiting goal was in 1998, during a military drawdown and a strengthening national economy (NRC Public Affairs Office, 2012). While it is difficult to know exactly what could have prevented such a recruiting failure, one should always keep in mind that recruiting is fallible and highly susceptible to circumstances beyond the Navy's control. As experience shows, the Navy needs to be prepared for cyclical changes in recruiting. The external factors that affected recruiting in 1998 may well influence the recruiting environment of the near future. Added to this is the prospect that the relative attractiveness of military pay and benefits could decline as steps are taken to cut defense expenditures.

Awareness and training can possibly mitigate the detrimental effects of a less favorable recruiting environment. Clearly, recruiter training has long-term effects, both good and bad, on recruiting ability. As observed in a 2009 Navy publication, recruiting can be one of the most stressful and demanding jobs for any sailor:

The mission of recruiting is to recruit men and women for enlisted, officer candidate, and officer status in the Regular and Reserve Components of the Navy. It is one of the most demanding billets in the Navy due to the pressures associated with a fast-paced sales environment. (MILPERSMAN 1306-964, para. 1, 2009)

Navy recruiters are responsible for building the Navy's fleet. High-performing fleet sailors transfer from their operational job in the fleet, they are provided training, and they are then sent out on this "independent duty" (MILPERSMAN 1306-964, 2009) to convince America's best and brightest young people to join the force. Due to recruiter efforts in fiscal year (FY) 2010, over 34,000 new recruits were contacted, contracted, and shipped to Boot Camp to be trained and eventually serve and support operational commands all over the world (NRC Public Affairs Office, 2012). In sheer magnitude, this is clearly a remarkable accomplishment.

Navy recruiters are normally junior sailors who have completed at least one successful operational tour. Recruiters can be either selected or volunteer for recruiting duty. Although a detailer tries to take the sailor's preferences into consideration, that is not always an option. Sailors will be taken out of normal jobs for their rate and placed into recruiting. The sailors will be trained on recruiting and selling basics and assigned to one of 26 Navy Recruiting Districts (NRDs). The NRD will then assign the recruiter to a specific station in its area of responsibility. Over 4,000 recruiters are present in 1,500 stations throughout the United States and outlying areas, including the Philippines, Guam, St. Croix, St. Thomas, and Puerto Rico. Often, recruiters are the only military presence in an area. The recruiter has the responsibility to expose the local population to the opportunities the military can provide. Sailors who have been successful in their initial tour and are assigned to recruiting should bring energy and that positive experience into the job, motivating quality applicants to learn more about opportunities in the fleet.

A.   RECRUITER REFRESHER TRAINING

To support recruiters during mid-tour, Navy Recruiting Command previously provided Recruiter Refresher Training (RRT). RRT was a one-week course conducted in Great Lakes to reinforce basic recruiting skills and to improve the performance of the

sailor while assigned to recruiting duty (Soutter & Sladyk, 1998). The course consisted of classroom training, recruiting questions answered by subject matter experts, and interaction with Recruiting Training Command leadership to understand their challenges. The net result was a significant increase in production for recruiters who attended the course. The course was canceled in the early 2000s due to fiscal constraints (J. L. Noble, personal communication, September 16, 2011).

B.   PURPOSE

Learning is a continuous process that neither begins nor ends in the classroom. Training is also more involved than merely providing information and then expecting retention of that information. Numerous factors can influence training effectiveness, including a trainee's span of attention, motivation, ability, and the type and quality of instructors (Wickelgren, 1977). Human capital theory, as noted by Ehrenberg and Smith (1997), states that "the knowledge and skills a worker has—which come from education and training, including the training that experience brings—generate a certain stock of productive capital" (as cited in Baron & Armstrong, p. 5, 2007). Both the Navy and the recruiter would benefit from having the most comprehensive training possible to ensure its effectiveness over the long term. The primary purpose of this thesis is to examine the current training continuum for recruiters, assess whether training gaps exist, and, if so, to determine whether these training gaps could possibly be mitigated by RRT.

Training programs should be periodically evaluated to determine whether they are meeting the ever-changing needs of the learner and to ensure that the training supports the strategic goals of the command (Kermally, 2004). Evaluation can be seen as a way to assign blame or issues; when done correctly, however, it allows leadership to understand training deficiencies and strengths (Guerra-Lopez, 2006). Because training, especially in recruiting, is influenced by factors outside of the formal training experience, it is important to look at elements such as incentives, environment, and motivation.

C.   RESEARCH QUESTIONS

The following research questions provide the framework for this thesis:

Primary: Should the Navy reinstitute refresher training for recruiters?

Secondary: How would RRT be executed? What role could incentives play in a Recruiter Training Continuum?

D.   ORGANIZATION OF THE STUDY

This thesis is divided into six chapters. Chapter II provides background information on recruiting operations. Chapter III is a literature review on studies of recruiter incentives, learning and forgetting in the military context, and recruiter performance factors. Chapter III also discusses the theoretical framework of training taxonomy, motivation, and incentives. Chapter IV presents the methodology used in the study. The results of the study are discussed in Chapter V. Finally, Chapter VI summarizes the study, offers conclusions and recommendations, and suggests areas for further research.

II. BACKGROUND

This chapter presents the command, training, and incentive structure currently in place in Navy Recruiting Command (NRC) and the Navy Recruiting Districts (NRD). Command support, training, and incentives are all critical to a recruiter's success. Although discussed separately, they are clearly interrelated and, in an ideal learning environment, mutually supportive. The recruiting environment is unique in manyrespects, and it is important to understand how the sailor's experience, leadership, incentives, and environment interact and affect the training continuum.

A.   NAVY RECRUITING

The mission of Navy Recruiting Command (NRC), according to its official website, is "to recruit the best quality men and women from the diverse population of our country to fill the Navy's ranks" (CNRC webpage, Mission, 2012). Additionally, NRC outlines its command vision: "Navy Recruiting is recognized for its technological innovation and effective use of resources to man the fleet of the 21st century with only the highest quality motivated men and women" (CNRC website, Vision, 2012).

NRC is headquartered in Millington, TN. Two distinct regions, East and West, report to NRC. Each region is led by a Commodore (Navy Captain). Each Commodore has 13 districts; each maintains an area of responsibility covering as few as one state or as many as five states (COMNAVCRUITCOMINST 5400.1H, 2011). As shown in Figure 1, each district is unique in size and responsibility. While the East and West Districts maintain separate operational and administrative chains of commands, there is a singular training department on the NRC staff. This change was part of a comprehensive reorganization completed in 2011, which added additional leadership responsibilities for Officer Recruiters as Division Officers, and consolidated the separate regional training departments into a singular training department at NRC (COMNAVCRUITCOMINST 5400.1H, 2011).

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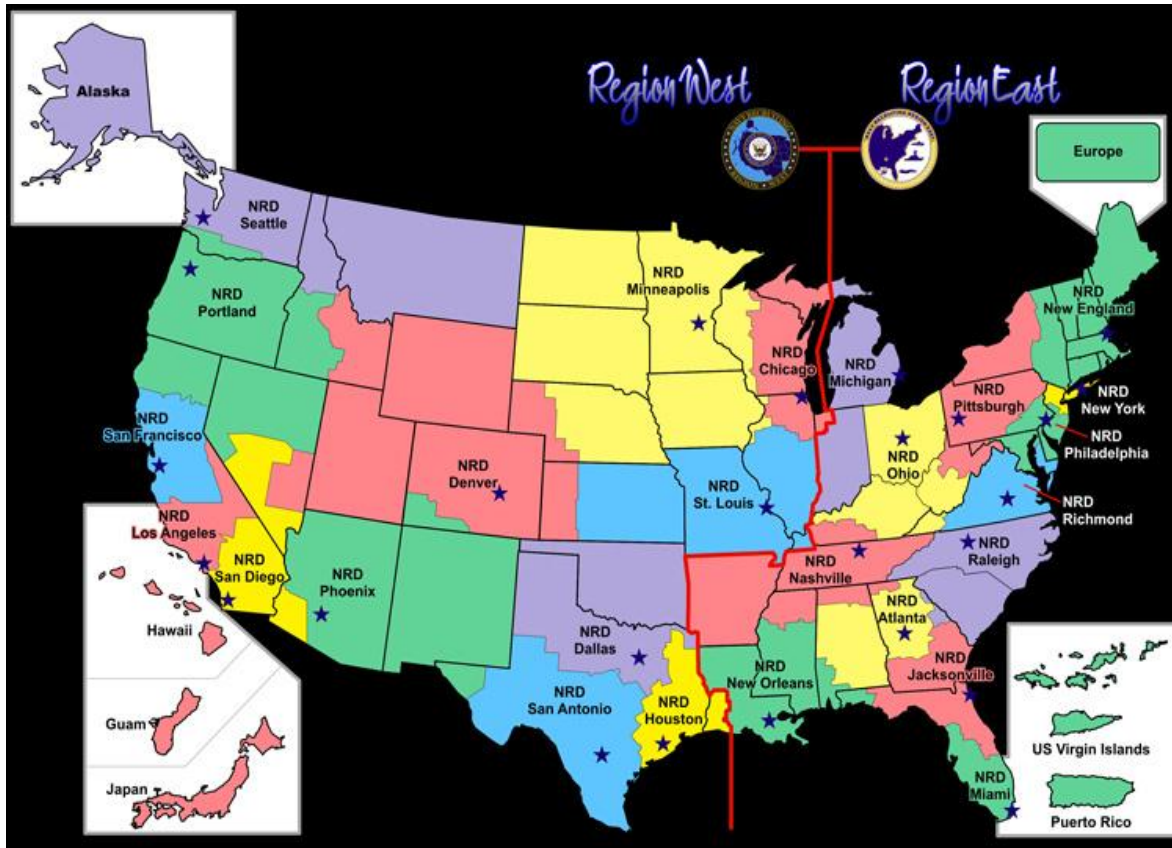
Figure 1.   Navy Recruiting Regions and Districts. Adapted from
http://www.cnrc.navy.mil/nrds.htm, 2012.

Recruiting districts have a dynamic chain of command concerning both co-location and training accountability. Unlike most commands, most of the recruiter's leadership is not located in the same area as the recruiting station. The only exception is the Leading Petty Officer (LPO), who is in charge of the recruiter's station (COMNAVCRUITCOMINST 5400.1H, 2011). However, despite the distance, everyone from the LPO to the Executive Officer (XO) at headquarters is held directly accountable for the recruiter's training. In fact, the XO is the command's training officer, and is the final approval for any recruiter's advanced recruiter Personnel Qualification Standards (PQS), certifying they are command-approved to represent the Navy and recruit future sailors (COMNAVCRUITCOMINST 5400.1H, 2011).

Unlike the enlisted force, the officer corps does not have a community dedicated solely to recruiting; therefore, each Navy Recruiting Officer's recruiting experiences and

expertise vary from district to district. Navy Recruiting Districts are commanded by a Commander whose previous assignment was as the XO at the same command (MILPERSMAN 1301-816, 2003). The Commanding Officer (CO) will take command for a period of 18–24 months and is relieved by the XO who has been onboard for approximately the same period of time. The CO's experience can fluctuate from a previous tour in recruiting to the 18 months they have in recruiting due to their time as the XO prior to taking command. In another recent change based on the 2010 reorganization, Officer and Enlisted Recruiting are no longer separated. A single Lieutenant Commander, the Operations Officer, is now in charge of all recruiting. The Operations Officer is a junior officer who likely has not had any experience in recruiting prior to this assignment. Recruiting tours for department heads will last from 24–36 months (MILPERSMAN 1301-104, 2003).

While experience is varied in the officer ranks, the Senior Enlisted Career Recruiting Force has a depth of knowledge from years of experience. The Chief Recruiter (CR) is a Career Recruiting Force (CRF) Master Chief. CR assignments are vetted through an extensive board and placement process (COMNAVCRUITCOMINST 5400.2E, 2003). CRs are proven recruiting experts normally with no less than eight years in the CRF. CRs have two Senior Chiefs acting as Assistant Chief Recruiters (ACR), one acting as the Enlisted ACR (EACR), and the other assigned as the Officer ACR (OACR). Like the CR, the ACR nominees are selected through a board, and assignments are approved by NRC (COMNAVCRUITCOMINST 5400.2E, 2003). Both the Senior Officer and Enlisted Leadership are centrally located at the NRD's headquarters.

Districts can cover a large area and population. To make the area more manageable, each district is broken down into divisions. Each division has an Officer Recruiter acting as a Division Officer (DivO) to provide the local leadership headquarters that personnel cannot logistically offer. Officer recruiters have varied backgrounds; reservists' recruiting assignments last up to five years, while active duty Officers are completing a post-operational, 24–36-month tour on recruiting(COMNAVCRUITCOMINST 5400.1H, 2011). DivOs are responsible for

overseeing training and production of the recruiters within the division and all administrative requirements for personnel, while continuing to meet their own recruiting goals and requirements. The DivO reports to both R-OPs and the CR, and collaborates with the OACR for officer recruiting production (COMNAVCRUITCOMINST 5400.1H, 2011). Divisions are decided based on populations and geographic areas. In a metropolitan area, a division can be comprised of five to six Navy Recruiting Stations (NRSs) within a thirty-mile radius. In more rural areas, a division will have the same number of stations, but in two separate states, a hundred miles apart.

Within each division, there is a Division Chief Leading Petty Officer (DLPO) to assist the DIVO. The DLPO member of the Career Recruiting Force is the local "subject matter expert" within the division, accountable for recruiter knowledge, production, and training. The DLPO works for the DivO, and maintains reporting requirements to both the OACR and EACR. Normally, the DLPO is rated between a Petty Officer First Class to a Senior Chief who works for the Division Officer and manages the LPOs. The DLPO is the local recruiting subject matter expert and drives production, provides training, and ensures all operational requirements are satisfied (COMNAVCRUITCOMINST 5400.1H). According to COMNAVCRUITCOMINST 5400.2E(2003), DLPO has between three and eight years of recruiting leadership.

The LPO of a station is usually a First- or Second-Class Petty Officer who has preferably been on recruiting duty for at least 18 months. Based on manning policies and availability, less-experienced personnel can be assigned as an LPO as needed according to COMNAVCRUITCOMINST 1136.2Q (2011). The LPO does not have to be in the CRF community; fleet recruiters who perform well and exhibit solid leadership abilities should assume responsibility as LPO (COMNAVCRUITCOMINST 1136.2Q, 2011). Stations normally have from two recruiters to seven recruiters. Typically, production recruiters are fleet recruiters, those who have been on recruiting duty and attended NORU after completing of a successful operational tour. The LPO is the recruiter's day-to-day leadership and provides most of the on-the-job training to recruiters throughout their tour (COMNAVCRUITCOMINST 1130.8J, 2011).

Recruiting duty is considered "one of the most demanding billets" (MILPERSMAN 1306-694) offered to sailors. Assignment as a recruiter can be requested by the sailor or assigned by the detailer to satisfy recruiting manpower needs. The Recruiter Quality of Life Survey, conducted in 2000 by the Joint Advertising Marketing Research and Studies (JAMRS) group, suggests that more than one-third of recruiters are assigned to recruiting duty without requesting the assignment (JAMRS, 2002). The Navy advertises incentives to attract people to recruiting. The Navy Personnel Command website boosts the following benefits on their webpage to encourage sailors to volunteer:

> Recruiting can be very rewarding with plenty of incentives. How about recruiting in your hometown or close to the location of your choice? How about earning more money? Recruiting offers Special Duty Assignment Pay (SDAP) of $450.00 per month…that's $5,400 extra a year! You may also be entitled to the use of a Government Vehicle, a Gas Card, a Cellular Phone, meritorious advancement (RCAP), Training (Sales Skills), and a Laptop Computer for use in your duties. (NPC Recruiting Duty, para 3, 2012)

The current Special Duty Assignment Pay mentioned by the Navy Personnel command is available only to recruiters, and only after they complete the basic recruiter Personnel Qualification Standards (PQS). As noted, recruiters may also be able to recruit in their hometown and, possibly, based on their performance, switch into the Career Recruiting Force (CRF). Transition into the CRF community requires review by an administrative board and a command endorsement (COMNAVCRUITCOMINST 5400.2E, 2003). Membership in the CRF ensures that a sailor will not be deployed, which means more stability for a sailor and his or her family.

B.   TRAINING PIPELINE

1.   School House Training

Navy Orientation Recruiting Unit (NORU) introduces sailors coming from the fleet to the basics of Navy recruiting. According to the NORU mission statement, "students must demonstrate what they learn in the classroom (…) they must help an applicant make an informed, mutually beneficial decision to join the Navy" (NORU

website, Mission Statement, 2011). All future recruiters successfully screened for a recruiting tour will attend Enlisted Recruiting Orientation, a five-week introductory course in Pensacola, Florida. NORU provides this 25-day training for up to 1,200 future recruiters yearly (CNRC, NORU Enlisted Navy Recruiter Orientation, n.d.). The dynamic curriculum consists of labs, PowerPoint lessons, role-playing, homework assignments, and computer-based tests. The training consists of four distinct classroom modules as well as physical training twice weekly (Student Guide for Enlisted Navy Recruiting Orientation/ Recruiter Canvasser, 2011). The modules are as follows:

Modules 1 and 2: Module 1 is the longest portion of the course and is taught over ten days with 60 hours of classroom instruction. Prior to reporting to NORU, it is likely the sailor's only experience with recruiting is through his or her own recruitment in the service. This module focuses on introducing sailors to the basics of recruiting. The curriculum is delivered through lectures and reinforced through labs. Professional Selling Skills (PSS), the Navy's primary recruiting system core, is introduced in the first week of training. To successfully complete this module, sailors must finish a PSS lab as well as a computer-based test at the end of the second week. Module 2 continues to build on the PSS core skills. The selling skills learned in week one are utilized to complete the terminal objectives in the prospecting class. Again, training is completed through a variety of methods, including classroom, lab, student speeches, and computer-based testing (Student Guide for Enlisted Navy Recruiting Orientation/ Recruiter Canvasser, 2011).

Modules 3 and 4: These modules are designed to increase the sailor's knowledge of programs and policy. The Navy Recruiter Manual-Enlisted (CRUITMAN) is introduced, and training is conducted on the contents and accessibility of information within the four-volume manual. Classroom instruction is also provided on the administrative requirements for all applicants and future sailors. Module 4 focuses on the code of conduct all recruiters must employ while they are assigned to recruiting duty. The capstone scenario is assigned and completed during the final week of the

ENRO curriculum. The capstone scenario and a computer-based test must be successfully completed prior to graduation (Student Guide for Enlisted Navy Recruiting Orientation/ Recruiter Canvasser, 2011).

2. On-The-Job Training

After graduation, recruiters are sent to their own recruiting stations for training. At this point, a recruiter must begin to satisfy the requirements in the PQS. To complete a PQS requirement, a sailor must be able to prove knowledge of a program or complete a required task (COMNAVCRUITCOMINST 1136.2Q, 2011). Navy Recruiting Station training begins with station indoctrination and basic recruiter training, both of which must be completed within 45 days of reporting. After the completion of basic recruit training, recruiters have another 4.5 months to complete their advanced recruiter training PQS. A board chaired by the Assistant Chief Recruiter is the culminating requirement for the advanced recruiter PQS. A recruiter is completely qualified and officially placed on production upon the successful completion of the board (COMNAVCRUITCOMINST 1136.2Q, 2011)

Advanced Recruiter is the most basic PQS a recruiter must complete while on recruiting duty. Additional qualifications are available, but they are not mandated if a recruiter does not desire a leadership position and prefers to be solely a recruiter during the 36-month tour. PSS core skills refresher training is required every four-to-six months with a Train the Trainer (T3) qualified instructor within the command. Additional training is required in accordance with the COMNAVCRUITCOM 1500.4N (2003), and is provided mainly through on-the-job training from the LPO or DLCPO. A recruiter evaluation board (REB) is conducted for recruiters who are unable to complete the basic recruiter course by the 90th day onboard (COMNAVCRUITCOM 1500.4N, 2003). For the advanced recruiter qualification, a recruiter has up to nine months to complete the PQS. Recruiters who are unable to complete the qualification, or are unable to produce contracts at an acceptable level in the first nine months of recruiting

duty, are brought to the Navy Recruiting District (NRD) headquarters for additional training and a REB to discuss their recruiting deficiencies (COMNAVCRUITCOM 1500.4N, 2003).

After a recruiter achieves the advanced recruiter qualification, his or her success is measured by the number of contracts achieved. The Production Per Recruiter (PPR) measure quantifies recruiting success. Sailors who are not able to maintain an established standard PPR are given additional training until they are either producing an acceptable number of contracts or are removed from recruiting (COMNAVCRUITCOMINST 5400.2E, 2003). At the same time, successful recruiters can earn points for the quality and types of contracts, and win awards based on the number of points earned (COMNAVCRUITCOMINST 1650.1B. 2008).

C.   NAVY RECRUITING COMMAND INCENTIVE POLICY

To motivate recruiting teams, NRC has implemented a comprehensive awards program that recognizes sailors for both individual and team success. The current awards instruction provides the following guidance:

> The current recruiting environment requires refocusing of enlisted recruiting assets to ensure future production mission success. Future Sailor Management, Community Service and youth program involvement have moved to the forefront of enlisted recruiting efforts. Although vital to continued recruiting success, these areas are not easily measurable in terms of awards metrics. ... However, when identifying outstanding recruiting personnel, the "whole person" concept must be applied. Personal and professional factors must be considered in addition to production success. College classes, professional certifications, impressive physical training accomplishments, civilian community awards and involvement are a few examples to consider when determining National Award winners for both individual and team awards. (COMNAVCRUITCOMINST 1650.1B, Section 5.1, 2008).

The "whole person" concept is a recent addition to the awards instruction so that recruiters can be evaluated on more than their recruiting ability. This is based on the limited availability of recruiting quotas throughout the nation. In line with this approach, recruiters are currently encouraged to improve themselves outside of recruiting.

However, the criteria for short-term awards are still based on Recruiter Incentive System (RIS) points or net contracts (COMNAVCRUITCOMNOTE 1650, 2011).

1. Individual Enlisted Production Awards and Recognition

Individual recognition guidance for production is provided monthly, quarterly, and annually. The awards include recognition in the *Navy Recruiter* magazine for a "Five Star" award for anyone who excels in their recruiting duties as determined by the NRD. The highest award for a recruiter is a Navy Commendation Medal, presented to the "Recruiter of the Year." Criteria for the annual awards are provided in the COMNAVCRUITINST 1650.1B (2008), and quarterly awards criteria are given in quarterly notices. Constant modification to awards notices allows CNRC to focus on the current needs of the Navy. Awards can be fundamentally based on either net contracts or RIS points.

The Recruiter Incentive System was born out of the "Freeman Plan" in 1979. The plan was named after Admiral Dewitt Freeman, who utilized incentive studies to create and implement this incentive system (Carroll, Lee, & Rao, 1986). The system assigns point values to different types of contracts with more points for quality, diversity, or special programs. Through this system, sailors are rewarded for contracting highly sought-after contracts. The plan also provides penalties for contracts that are lost in the prior month and in the month the future sailor would have attended boot camp. This penalty was designed to reduce the loss of new recruits, who cannot easily be replaced in the pipeline.

2. Gold Wreath Awards

All recruiters are given a recruiter badge upon graduation from NORU. The badge, with no wreath around it, is referred to as the "Rookie Cookie." Recruiters are eligible to earn a Gold Wreath award for the badge by obtaining a combination of four reserve or active new contracts in any three-month period or three contracts considered "high quality" (based on an Armed Services Vocational Aptitude Battery test score) in a consecutive three-month period. Additionally, they must be PQS qualified and cannot be

delinquent on any PQS (COMNAVCRUITCOMINST 1650.1B, 2008). Earning the first gold wreath is seen as a rite of passage for sailors assigned to recruiting.

3. Recruiting Command Advancement Program (RCAP)

The RCAP allows individual NRDs to meritoriously promote any recruiter who has performed exceptionally during their tour of duty. The number of RCAP billets allowed for each NRD is based on a percentage of overall manning, with additional billets provided for districts that meet all targets for diversity and other special programs. Recruiters who meet the time-in-rate requirements, pass the previous exam, and also exhibit sustained superior performance may be considered for meritorious promotion (COMNAVCRUITCOMINST 1650.1B, 2008).

4. End-of-Year Awards

At the end of each fiscal year, NRD, Regions, and CNRC give awards to individuals and teams recognized for recruiting excellence. The criteria to earn this higher-level recognition include superior recruiting performance and RIS points as well as professional development through education, community service, and certifications. Personnel who receive the end-of-year (EOY) awards travel to Washington DC for "ROY Week" and are recognized with a personal award (COMNAVCRUITCOMINST 1650.1B).

D. CHAPTER SUMMARY

The recruiting environment is unlike the operational environment a sailor normally experiences on his or her first tour of duty in the Navy. Fleet sailors are taken out of their area of expertise, provided 25 days of formal training, and then given a great deal of independence to recruit in the best interests of the Navy. The Chain of Command is separated by varying distances, yet this does not mitigate the responsibility to the sailors for their training and ultimate success. While schoolhouse training provides the foundation of learning, on-the-job training is the key to building and sharpening recruiting skills. Finally, the incentive system is comprehensive, offering recognition, awards, and the opportunity to promote early for recruiting success. It is important to

understand these nuances of the recruiter's experience to fully grasp how they interact, not only with each other, but also with the theoretical constructs discussed in the next chapter.

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III. LITERATURE REVIEW AND THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Numerous recruiting studies have been conducted in the past thirty years; unfortunately, none of these studies has focused on the direct effects of recruiter training on recruiting. Studies have examined the effects of incentives on recruiter performance and factors that predict recruiter success. Additionally, studies have been conducted on skill decay and forgetting in some military jobs, although no studies have been conducted specifically on recruiting. While following studies address learning and forgetting in different facets of the military, the results are applicable to learning and forgetting in recruiting.

According to Sardar (2010), "training should make the personnel skilled enough to do the job on hand efficiently leading to targeted productivity levels" (p. 22). Training for recruiters is provided in two distinct stages: the foundation of knowledge is provided in the schoolhouse and that information is transformed into recruiting skill through on-the-job training. Learning is a complex concept that is influenced by several external and internal factors. Therefore, to understand if the training continuum is built to support the recruiter acquiring the appropriate selling skills, it is important to understand how and why people learn.

A. INCENTIVES AND RECRUITER PERFORMANCE

In 1990, Beth Asch evaluated the effect of incentives on recruiter productivity. Her study, "Navy Recruiter Productivity and the Freeman Plan," sought to understand how the points, awards, and fiscal year constraints influenced recruiter success (Asch, 1990). Points are accumulated throughout the year based on contract type and quantity; however, points are not carried over fiscal years, and awards are based only on the points earned within five months of the fiscal year. Based on the assumption that "the recruiter's objective is to maximize their changes to win a reward, and to that end develop their strategy for earning points" (Summary Section), she analyzed how and when the points were earned within the limited time frame (Asch, 1990).

Asch (1990) found that recruiters do seem to respond to the incentives established in the Freeman Plan, but cyclically, based on the end of the reward cycle. She found that during the production cycle productivity increased; however, after a recruiter earns an award, productivity decreases. She also found that, at the end of a tour, recruiters' productivity tends to drop noticeably; however, this is mitigated if the transfer timeframe is similar to the end of the award cycle. Based on these findings alone, she was not able to discern whether the level of effort actually varied over the production cycle or whether a recruiter was consistently recruiting, but only writing the contracts at the end of the fiscal year. Regardless of how the results are interpreted, it was shown that recruiter outputs were significantly different throughout the year, coinciding with the awards timeframe (Asch, 1990).

B.   PREDICTORS OF SUCCESS

Some sailors are naturally inclined to be more successful in recruiting based on aptitude and personality. To identify those recruiters who have a better chance at success Navy Recruiting Command has conducted several studies to create a Recruiter Assessment Battery (RAB). The purpose of the RAB is to screen sailors prior to assignment to recruiting, so that only those who are likely to be successful in recruiting will receive orders to a recruiting district. One of the first studies relating to the RAB began in 1979. Borman, Toquam, and Rosse (1979) conducted an initial study of 62 recruiters from NRDs Detroit and St. Louis. Borman et al. (1979) utilized the predictor test, and peer and supervisory performance evaluations over a six-month period to conduct their study. Using these data, the researchers identified five critical predictors of success:

1) Selling Skills;
2) Administrative skills;
3) Human Relations;
4) Performance; and
5) Production.

To validate their findings, they conducted a second study with the proven predictor test (Borman et al., 1979). A. representative sample of 267 Navy recruiters

from ten NRDs was selected.Their findings confirmed that the five previously identified factors were a strong indicator of recruiting success.

In 2007, Penney, Borman, and Beardman conducted a similar study to update and validate the previous results. The initial validation analyzed 134 recruiters taking the RAB, supervisory review, and production data. In the initial testing, Penney et al. (2007) found the highest correlation was between selling skills and production (.61), though significant correlation was also found between human relation skills and production (.33) and organizing skills and production (.23). To verify these results, the RAB was given to 254 recruiters in three different NRDs. The second study's evaluations were conducted by the LPO and the Leading Chief Petty Officer LCPO; however, no peer evaluations were utilized during this second study (Penney et al., 2007). Similar to the initial results, significant correlation was found between selling skills and production, human relations skills and production, and organizing skills and production, as seen in Table 1. While the correlation was not as strong, it is apparent that selling skills are critical to the success of recruiters (Penny et al., 2007).

Table 1.   Correlations Between Criterion Measures. Adapted from "Development of a Test Battery to Select Navy Recruiters" by L. M. Penney, W. C. Borman, and R. M. Bearden, 2007, Navy Personnel Research, Studies, and Technology.

Criterion Measure	Production	Selling Skills	Human Relations Skills	Organizing Skills	Overall Performance
Selling Skills	.52**				
Human Relations Skills	.28**	.74**			
Organizing Skills	.10	.44**	.49**	-na-	

N= 197
* < .05
* p < .01

C.   SKILL DECAY AND FORGETTING

In 1982, The Navy Personnel Research and Development Center conducted an analytical review of skill retention to address maintenance issues in the fleet (Hurlock & Montague, 1982). The analysts focused on identifying relevant research and theories on skill decay and discussing the implications this research has on the military. Hurlock and Montague (1982) concluded that most skill deterioration is the result of several factors, including level of initial learning, non-utilization periods, skill type, events during skill non-use, and lack of effective feedback. Additionally, the analysts found that, in the military, "job performance is usually assessed with subjective and qualitative methods that provide little information for identifying skill levels or loss" (Hurlock & Montague, p. 2, 1982). Without comprehensive evaluations of performance, accurately identifying skill decay is not possible.

While Hurlock and Montague (1982) were unable to find studies that could be directly related to military tasks and jobs, they were able to find five themes that could be the biggest influencers on military learning and forgetting. Personnel characteristics, specific abilities and experience were found to be the most relevant personal traits for reduction of skill decay. Those who are able to learn the information quickly and thoroughly will have a better chance of retaining information. Previous experiences also help build new skills and assist in learning new skills (Hurlock & Montague, 1982). Task variables also influence skill decay; complex tasks with a large number of steps will suffer from skill decay more quickly than simpler tasks. Reinforcement on the job, or lack of similarity between the learning situation and actual skill use, will result in rapid skill deterioration (Hurlock and Montague, 1982).

The final two characteristics—training and retraining—have significant consequences on the ability to retain material. Initial training is the single most important factor to learning, according to Hurlock and Montague:

> The amount of initial training is directly related to the amount of retention of job skills during periods of nonuse. The degree of initial training needed in school or on-the-job to prevent skill loss problems will depend

on whether job conditions provide personnel with enough practice to maintain or to improve their skill level. (Hurlock and Montague, 1982 p. 6)

To support the initial training, whether formal or on-the-job, effective feedback must be provided. Also, the practice of test-taking supports both original learning and reinforcement of learning (Hurlock & Montague, 1982). Retraining is important to decrease overall skill decay, and retraining that is similar to the original training is most effective; however, the time can be reduced drastically. According to Hurlock and Montague 1982)"even short periods of practice can keep skills at relatively high levels, and practice of only one aspect of a task seems to be helpful in maintaining performance" (p. 10).

Hurlock and Montague (1982) point out that Navy training and skills do not mirror civilian jobs and tasks exactly. Navy skills are not learned in one straightforward process; skills can be learned in pieces over months of formal training and on-the-job training (Hurlock & Montague, 1982). Additionally, non-utilization periods are difficult to identify and quantify. Finally, the largest problem is the lack of resources to recognize and define skill decay; the Navy does not employ any assets to measure and accurately capture this information. Without a quantifiable measure, skill loss is theoretical and cannot be effectively addressed within the Navy (Hurlock &Montague, 1982).

D.   THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Understanding how and why people learn is critical to recognizing whether a training continuum supports the learner. Training, and ultimately learning, is not a straightforward process; many external and internal factors influence learning and the retention of information. For example, in a classroom of 30 students, there will be 30 individual levels of understanding, ability, experience and motivation. Awareness of how objective information is translated into subjective learning is important in evaluating how different learners can achieve the same level of ability in a standard training pipeline.

1.   Learning Theory

Learning is generally difficult to define and measure. Learning can rarely be observed; it can only be assumed by a change in behavior. Further confusing the matter, performance of a task may be inhibited by other unobservable factors such as desire, motivation, attention, or ability; all these factors confound the determination if something has been "learned" (Wickelgren, 197, p. 5). Because of this ambiguity, a formal definition has never been provided; however, learning is generally accepted as "a relatively permanent process resulting from practice and reflected in a change in performance" (Logan1970, p. 2).

A fundamental piece of learning is memory. Although many different types of memory can be identified, we will use the term primarily in reference to the long-term memory of formal knowledge and training. According to Weiten (2007), the memory process consists of three parts: encoding, storage, and retrieval. Errors can occur at any of the phases, and information must go through all three phases to be successful (Weiten, 2007).

Encoding is the process of taking information and imputing it into memory. Encoding is a critical part of the process, because it provides the foundation for the knowledge (Weiten, 2007). Cracks in this foundation will result in flawed learning or no learning at all. For a person to properly encode information, he or she must pay attention to the information being provided. Attention may be divided, due to additional stimuli that affect the encoding process (Weiten, 2007).

Storage is the second phase in the process; information can be stored in either long-term or short-term memory. For training purposes, it is hoped that most instruction will remain in long-term memory (Weiten, 2007). While short-term memory is considered to last less than twenty seconds, long-term memory is seen as a limitless amount of storage that can last indefinitely if information is encoded correctly and placed in long-term memory; it will be available when required during the retrieval process (Weiten, 2007).

Retrieval is the ability to pull information, as needed, to complete a task. Recognition, identifying previously learned information, is the easiest way to initiate retrieval (Weiten, 2007). In this scenario, retrieval cues are provided, allowing the information to be remembered more easily. Retrieval without any cues is more difficult, since the ability to recall information will decay more quickly than memory based on recognition (Weiten, 2007). The three steps of the memory process will comprise the first step in the learning process.

2.   Bloom's Taxonomy

Bloom's taxonomy for learning was introduced in 1948 by Benjamin Bloom and his colleagues as a framework for the continuum of both learning and training (Anderson & Krathwohl, 2001). The taxonomy outlined the steps in which people learn; from that, it was used in teaching, ensuring each of the six steps were satisfied for complete learning (Athanassiou, McNett & Harvey, 2003). When originally introduced, the steps were knowledge, comprehension, application, analysis, synthesis, and evaluation. Today, these steps have been updated to remember, understand, apply, analyze, evaluate, and create (Anderson & Krathwohl, 2001). Bloom's taxonomy views learning as a hierarchal process in which a solid grasp of each level is required to move forward to the next level (Anderson & Krathwohl, 2001).

Remembering is the direct link between memory and the first step of Bloom's taxonomy. Information, properly encoded and stored, can be properly remembered (retrieved) and satisfy the central piece of the learning process (Anderson & Krathwohl, 2001). Fundamental knowledge of processes, terms, and rules dominate in military tasks. Therefore, remembering is a critical piece to military training (Wisher & Sabol, 1999). Meaningful learning is different from rote learning; if learners only memorize facts, they may not be able to move onto the next phase of learning (Anderson & Krathwohl, 2001).   To ensure the lesson has meaning, the next phase should be evidence of understanding.

Understanding information allows for application in new situations.   When students understand a topic, they are able to draw connections between previous

knowledge and new information (Anderson & Krathwohl, 2001). Analyzing looks back at the pieces of the information and allows the learner to independently understand how things work together. Once learners can take what they learn, and then evaluate new situations based on their knowledge, they have mastered the evaluating phase. Creating allows a learner to generate a completely new scenario or lesson based on what they have learned. Creating is considered mastery of a lesson. The ability to create builds on the previous steps and, in accordance with Bloom's taxonomy, is the pinnacle of learning (Anderson & Krathwohl, 2001).

3. Motivational Theory

Motivation to learn is as critical to learning as is the quality of instruction. While motivation for learning is seen in animals as a physical drive, it can be based on either a biological need or psychological drive in humans. Logan (1970) defines motivation as "the activator or energizer" (p. 152) to learning. Similar to learning, motivation cannot be observed; it is a theoretical construct. Without the desire to learn, attention would be minimal and the encoding process would be weak, if present at all. Therefore, if behavior has changed through learning, it is assumed motivation is involved, but that it is internal to the learner. With regard to human learning, two types of motivation are defined: drive motivation and incentive motivation (Logan, 1970).

Drive motivation is the intrinsic impetus for completing a goal (Logan, 1970). Learning a new skill, understanding a lesson, or meeting an objective is the satisfier for drive motivation. Incentive motivation is the extrinsic stimulus provided if one can learn this new skill or lesson, or meet the objective. Singularly, the drives can provide adequate motivation to learn; ideally, both types will combine to provide the peak motivation (Logan, 1970). Motivation is required to perform tasks and influences how one learns, but it can also have diminishing returns. There is a point in which excessive motivation results in rote memorization instead of actual synthesis of material (Logan, 1970).

4. Other Relevant Theories

The following theories will also affect learning and forgetting; they are analyzed in Chapter V concerning the learning continuum. Maslow's "hierarchy of needs" outlines

five needs that motivate individuals to act. As seen in Figure 2, the apex, level 5, is the need for self-actualization (Kressler, 2003). The motivation at this level is to gain a strong understanding of the world while achieving independence. Level 4 revolves around an individual's self-esteem: achieve goals and recognition for one's efforts. Love needs comprise the third level: to work, which includes the ability to fit in and to be seen as a team player. Levels 2 and 1 consist of biological and basic psychological needs, including stability, hunger, and rest (Kressler, 2003).
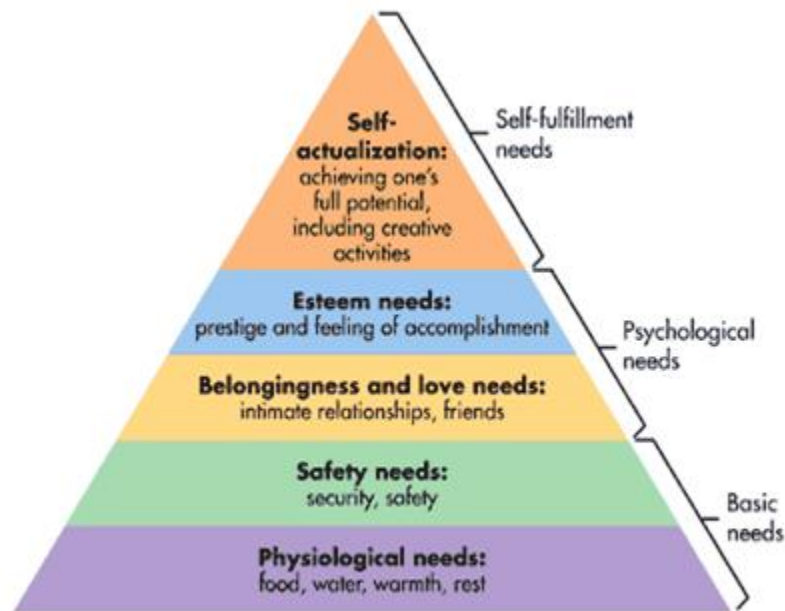
Figure 2. Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs. Adapted from www.teachnology.com, 2012.

Herzberg's "motivation-hygiene theory" offers a unique perspective on motivation. Herzberg identified two separate aspects of job satisfaction, extrinsic and intrinsic values. Extrinsic factors or hygiene factors can be pay, benefits, or working conditions (Kressler, 2003). Intrinsic characteristics are dubbed motivators. Recognition, achievement, and authority are examples of these motivators. According to Herzberg, the presence of motivational factors increases satisfaction, but the lack of these factors does not necessarily have a negative effect. Conversely, if hygiene factors are not met, an individual will be dissatisfied (Kressler, 2003). Hygiene factors and motivators operate independently of each other and one cannot be increased with the intent of having an effect on the other (Aswathappa, 2010). Hygiene factors correlate with Maslow's first four levels of needs, while motivators represent levels 5 and 6 of Maslow's hierarchy (Aswathappa, 2010).

Vroom's "theory of expectancy" states motivation in an individual is based on a positive combination of valence, instrumentality, and expectancy. *Valence* is the internal value that the personal goal has to the person (Kressler, 2003). As with all three aspects, it can be positive or negative. *Instrumentality* is the individual perception of how likely it is the learner can actually achieve the goal. Finally, *expectancy* is the perceived outcome of the personal task. All three of these must be positive for a person to be properly motivated to complete the task. Vroom's theory of motivation focuses on both the intrinsic values of a goal and the perceived results of accomplishing a goal (Kressler 2003).

Similarly, "goal-setting" theory is based on setting achievable goals and allowing personnel the opportunity meet those goals (Aswathappa, 2010). Additionally, goal-setting can be utilized to provide feedback and monitoring of individual success. Goal-setting motivates a person through the fundamental desire to achieve goals. It is natural to have goals and anticipate reaching them (Aswathappa, 2010). Accomplishment of a goal can boost self-esteem or satisfy a motivating factor. Also, in recruiting, individual

achievement significantly contributes to team success, which enhances commitment to success for the individual as well as the team. Commitment to goals depends on an individual's perceived ability to achieve these goals. If a goal is overly difficult or seems unachievable, goal-setting will lack any motivational power (Aswathappa, 2010).

5.   Forgetting and Skill Decay

If not properly addressed, the problem of forgetting or skill decay can undermine the learning process. Skill decay is the loss of skills or knowledge. Sailors are provided a short period of intense training prior to their arrival to their recruiting station. Recruiters do not report to their recruiting station with the same level of knowledge of recruiting

principles and policies that they had when they left NORU. Forgetting, and ultimately skill decay, can negate everything the sailor learned in NORU if not appropriately addressed and ultimately reduced.

In 1885, Hermann Ebbinghaus created the "forgetting curve" based on forgetting experiments he conducted (Srivastava, 2006). For the purposes of his study, forgetting is defined simply as material learned minus material retained. The "forgetting curve" suggests that a majority of forgetting happens immediately after learning and then continues to degrade, at a slower rate, over time. Learning and forgetting can actually occur simultaneously; both are consistently occurring throughout one's life. Forgetting rates can be mitigated by several factors, but forgetting will always occur to some degree (Srivastava, 2006).

Several factors affect the rate at which a person forgets information. Over-learning a topic can significantly reduce the rate at which forgetting occurs.(Hurlock & Montague, 1982). Additionally, nonuse can influence the overall decay of knowledge and skills. Any period of time when a skill is not rehearsed or used is considered a period of nonuse. Feedback is also considered critical to remembering information; timely and accurate feedback will enhance the ability of a learner to retain a skill. Additional elements can also influence forgetting, including the ability level of the learner, the quality of review, and the number of steps (Hurlock& Montague, 1980).

6. Refresher Training and Retraining

Fortunately, retraining or the reacquisition of knowledge can be attained quickly through a variety of low-cost methods. Retraining can increase experience and reestablish skills, if executed correctly. Aspects of retraining that must be taken into consideration include conditions, methods, and time. According to Hurlock and Montague (1980), retraining will be most effective if the conditions closely resemble the original training. Additionally, testing, learner aptitude, rehearsal, and emphasis on the importance of the training can help to improve the results of the retraining (Hurlock & Montague, 1980).

The Navy previously offered a Recruiter Refresher Training course. This course was a one-week course conducted in Great Lakes, IL. The study was conducted by CNRC in 1998 to evaluate the effectiveness of this refresher training (Soutter & Sladyk, 1998). In this study, the productivity of recruiters who had attended the course was compared with that of students who had not attended any training. Based on the study, 871 gross contracts were attributed to the skills and ability attained in the refresher training (Soutter & Sladyk, 1998). In 2003, the Refresher Training Course was cancelled due to funding issues (J. L. Noble, personal communication, September 16, 2011).

E. CHAPTER SUMMARY

Learning is a continuous process that occurs throughout a person's life. A sailor who enters NORU learns the information in his or her own way, based on previous experiences and personal motivation within their own timeline. Their knowledge then diminishes at an individual rate based on over-learning, aptitude, motivation, and their own previous experiences. While forgetting is inevitable, there is no suitable way to assess how much information has been lost, whether the information actually has been lost, or whether the behavior is not exhibited because the learner is not motivated. There is no way to directly observe or measure learning, forgetting, and motivation. Understanding the theory behind these principles and evaluating the current policy and environment can provide a better understanding of the current state and efficiency of the recruiter training continuum.

The recruiting experience, while a job, is also an ongoing learning process. Recruiters are influenced by several internal and external factors that affect their ability to practice material and to synthesize their knowledge into skills on the job. The learning continuum should marry to the learning progression found in Bloom's taxonomy, and recruiters should find motivation through incentives and the recruiting environment. The optimal training continuum comprehensively supports the learner in all aspects of learning.

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IV. METHODOLOGY

This thesis compares the ideal learning continuum with the current recruiter training continuum, incorporating all three properties of learning: information, motivation, and repetition of skills. Professionally, a recruiter has many competing interests and requirements. If not aligned properly, these competing factors will work against each other, resulting in more frustration than success for a recruiter and the overall recruiting process. This study was conducted to analyze the factors that affect the recruiter's experience and training experience. Ultimately, this study examines the future of recruiting internally, and externally seeks to identify gaps in the existing continuum that can affect recruiter performance. This research is designed to reveal possible gaps in information, motivation, and repetition within the recruiting force. The primary source for information is analysis of the current policies of CNRC, current recruiting environmental factors, and surveys conducted by the Joint Advertising Marketing Research and Study (JMARS). Learning, motivation, and forgetting are difficult to quantify. Consequently, the thesis focuses on theoretical analysis, with supporting data provided by internal guidance, information on the external and internal recruiting environment, and external surveys. Of special interest is the 2010 Recruiter Quality of Life survey (JAMRS, 2010).

A. POLICIES

Navy recruiting is highly regulated by policies and instructions. This is due to the sensitive and subjective nature of working with the age-eligible population, especially those under 18 years of age. Most facets of the organizational structure, process, and incentive programs are regulated by instructions.

Instructions are targeted at different levels of the recruiting process with different intended audiences. The Navy Recruiting Manual (CRUITMAN) COMNAVCRUITCOMINST 1130.8J is the primary source for recruiters on all recruiting topics, from programs to requirements, as well as for day-to-day operations

guidance. Recruiters are responsible for maintaining an updated copy of the CRUITMAN available to them at all times (COMNAVCRUITCOMINST 1130.8J).

These instructions provide policy guidance for recruiter behavior and activities. Polices are reviewed periodically to see how they fit into the theoretical constructs of learning, motivation, and reinforcement. Additional instructions that influence policy and the current recruiter training continuum are the COMNAVINST 1650.1B Awards Manual and the COMNAVCRUITCOMINST 1500.4N Training Program Policy and Procedures for Navy Recruiting Command Field Activities (2010; 2008). COMNAVCRUITCOMINST 5400.1H Navy Recruiting Command Organizational Manual (SORM) establishes the organizational structure for both CNRC and NRD (2011). Policies and instructions are utilized in this study to identify any structural gaps in the recruiting support structure.

B. RECRUITING ENVIRONMENT

As previously observed, recruiting is influenced greatly by both external and internal factors. Internal factors can be controlled by the individual command or by CNRC. External factors can be predicted with some accuracy, although it is difficult, if not impossible, to control these factors.

1. Internal Environment

The internal environment is influenced by several factors, including manning, incentive programs, recruiting ability, funding, and quota ability. Goal-setting and goal accomplishment are among the most important factors to affect the internal recruiting environment. A station, along with an individual's ability to meet goals and assignments, can change the priorities and the overall satisfaction with recruiting.

2. External Environment

Recruiting is affected by the external environment, including popular perceptions of the military, national or regional economic concerns, and the opinions of persons (such as family members, school officials, coaches, and ministers) who can influence the enlistment decisions of potential recruits. An analysis of the current external recruiting

environment can help to identify any gaps in the current training continuum for recruiters. A historical review of accessibility of contracts based on these external factors can consequently provide a general forecast for the future of recruiting.

C.   SURVEYS

JAMRS conducts surveys to study the perceptions of the youth population, recruiter quality of life, and other issues of interest to the recruiting community. The results are briefed as needed to identify any current and upcoming internal and external recruiting concerns. The results of these surveys are analyzed and compared with the factors required for successful recruiting and training within CNRC.

The Recruiter Quality of Life survey has been conducted five times since 1998, with the most recent survey in 2010. The survey studies important aspects of the recruiters' job satisfaction and overall quality of life. The results of the survey provide essential information to CNRC and Navy leaders about the overall perceptions of recruiting within the force. While the survey has 84 official questions, it contains up to 240 items for a sailor to rate, from satisfaction to SDAP, to ability to meet goals. Table 2 provides an example.

Table 2.　　　Example Question form Recruiter Quality of Life Survey. Adapted from "Recruiter Quality of Life Survey: 2010," by Joint Advertising Market and Research Studies, 2010.

24. To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements about your coworkers?

	STRONGLY DISAGREE	DISAGREE	NEITHER AGREE NOR DISAGREE	AGREE	STRONGLY AGREE	NOT APPLICABLE
A. My coworkers can be relied on when things get tough at work	①	②	③	④	⑤	NA
B. My coworkers are willing to listen to work-related problems	①	②	③	④	⑤	NA
C. My coworkers help me get my job done	①	②	③	④	⑤	NA
D. The morale of the recruiters I work with is good	①	②	③	④	⑤	NA

D.　　TRAINING CONTINUUM

A solid training continuum is based on three interacting principles: information, motivation, and repetition. The current policies and recruiting environment are analyzed with regard to these three critical aspects. Learning relies on success within each element of the continuum. Although they are separated as three different parts, the requirements overlap and interact throughout the process.

1.　　Information

Basic knowledge and information are the core requirement for all learning. Current training policies, requirements, and tools are matched to Ebbinghaus' "theory of forgetting." (Weiten, 2007, p. 277)   As shown in Figure 3, Ebbinghaus "theory of forgetting" indicates that most forgetting occurs almost immediately after the

presentation of new information. As shown, the percentage of information loss happens rapidly, with only 21 percent of information retained after 31 days. Forgetting occurs throughout the process, and it is an aspect that must be addressed both in the short-term as well as in the long-term. Based on the analysis of the information, possible gaps can be identified and addressed. The easiest and most efficient method to mitigate information loss is consistent review (Srivastava, 2006).
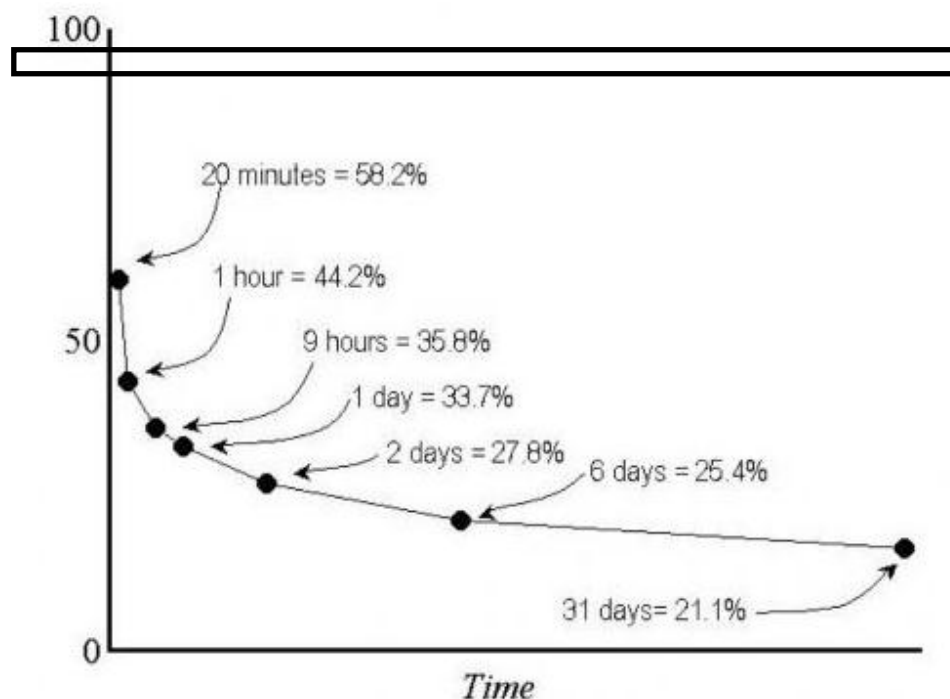
Figure 3.   Percentage of information lost over time based on Ebbinghaus "Forgetting Curve" Adapted from (http://www.elearningcouncil.com, 2010)

Information and remembering are in the bottom tier of Bloom's taxonomy. Figure 5 displays the hierarchal structure of learning based on Bloom's taxonomy as well as the required six steps to obtain skill mastery. Although it can be difficult to distinguish progression from one level to another in this taxonomy, it is important that recruiters be afforded the opportunity to achieve each level to reach skill mastery. A comparison of the current training requirements to the taxonomy may reveal opportunity gaps for the progression of learning to mastery.

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Figure 4.   Bloom's Taxonomy. Adapted from "Bloom's Taxonomy," R. C. Overbaugh & L. Schultz, http://www.odu.edu.

2.   Motivation and Repetition

Motivation to accomplish a skill is internally established, yet can be influenced by external forces. The current policies for incentives are specifically created to motivate recruiters to succeed in meeting the goals that CNRC has established. Survey results and policies are reviewed in comparison with popular motivational theory, including Maslow's hierarchy of needs, Herzberg's motivation-hygiene constructs, and goal-setting theory. Based on motivational theory, survey results, and the current policies in place, motivation and incentives may prove to be misaligned.

Repetition, review, and effective feedback are critical to learning and the retention of skill and knowledge. Again, policy and survey data are analyzed to confirm the opportunity to review and receive effective feedback throughout the recruiting process. Unless original learning and motivation are present, it would be fruitless to reinforce learning without an imbedded opportunity to do so. Reviewing policies can verify whether the right reinforcement training is available by the right people at the right times.

E.   CHAPTER SUMMARY

This study focuses on qualitative data, with quantitative inputs provided primarily by an external surveying agency. The complexity of the intrinsic and extrinsic factors that influence a recruiter's behavior cannot be completely captured in this analysis. This study

analyzes the training continuum based on the three identified parts of learning: information, motivation, and repetition. Because all the pieces build on each other, weakness in one aspect will have an effect on the other aspects of the training continuum. The next chapter identifies the possible strengths and weakness on the training cycle, based on the policies, perceptions, and recruiting environment.

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V.   EVALUATION OF TRAINING MOTIVES AND INCENTIVES

This chapter examines the training capability of the current learning environment and requirements, and compares it to existing learning and motivational theories. A comparative analysis of the previously discussed theories with the actual policies, survey results, and instructions allows for the identification of training opportunity gaps. These identified gaps may lead to skill decay, which can be mitigated by refresher training.

The acquisition of skills—in this case, selling skills—is a complex process that consists of learning, the desire to learn, and rewards. The three separate components of training must work together to create an ideal learning environment. The training pipeline should provide consistent opportunities to enhance skills and knowledge. The learner should be sufficiently motivated and have the desire to learn, and the external incentives should be available to encourage success in learning. Training, motivation and incentives are all examined separately while addressing the primary question of this thesis: Should refresher training be reestablished for recruiters?

A.   TRAINING

As stated in the *CRUITMAN*, a 2011 Navy recruiting instruction:

> The basic sales technique taught to all recruiters, Professional Sales Skill (PSS) emphasizes the importance of focusing on customer needs, while creating dialogue between the recruiter and the applicant to ensure information exchanged is sufficient enough for the applicant to make an informed buying decision. (COMNAVCRUITCOMINST 1130.8J, Volume 1, 2011)

PSS, by Achieve Global, is the fundamental system by which recruiters "sell" the Navy. According to COMNAVCRUITCOMINST 1500.4N (2008), the process includes four steps (Enc 11, 2008):

1. **Opening**. Opening is the introduction of the possible recruit to the recruiter and the Navy. In opening, a recruiter is trying to set an agenda for the discussion and also trying to gain acceptance from the possible recruit.

2. **Probing**. The purpose of probing is to clearly understand the needs of the prospect. It is important the recruiter understands why these needs exist.

3. **Supporting**. In supporting, the recruiter establishes how the military can satisfy the needs of the prospect.

4. **Closing**. In closing, the recruiter and the prospect have reached an understanding that the military can satisfy the needs of the prospect and they are ready to move forward.

These selling skills are the bedrock to good recruiting. For the purpose of this analysis, the training continuum evaluation focuses on the retention and review of these specific skills. The foundations of recruiting sales through PSS are provided during the experience at NORU. These basic skills will be enhanced on the job through practical experiences and formal training. Utilizing skills on the job while prospecting or conducting one-on-one interviews provides the on-the-job reinforcement of skills. Formal training consists of two parts: Personnel Qualification Standards (PQS), which is normally completed within the first twelve months, and follow-on training, in accordance with COMNAVCRUITCOMINST 1500.4N Training Program Policy and Procedures for Navy Recruiting Command Field Activities.

1. Personnel Qualification Standards

According to COMNAVCRUITCOMINST 1136.2Q *Personnel Qualification Standards*, the main purpose of PQS is to provide:

> A good handoff between formal training and field training will the learning continuum be effective across the entire spectrum of skills needed within Navy Recruiting. The desired outcome is to provide a systematic method to optimize "show and tell" training within the actual work environment and ensure the trainee masters needed knowledge, skills, and abilities resulting in increased productivity. (p. 2, 2011).

The initial requirement for a sailor reporting to NRS is to complete the basic recruiter PQS. This PQS must be completed within the first 45 days onboard (COMNAVCRUITCOMINST 1136.2Q, 2011). The PQS consists of eleven distinct requirements, including station indoctrination, the Division Officer (DIVO) expectations,

and standard operating procedures. This PQS is a new addition to the formalized continuum, replacing the requirement for both station and Navy Recruiting District indoctrination. The completion of this primary PQS indicates a familiarization and adherence to operating procedures of the station and knowledge of basic recruiting principles.

The Basic Recruiter PQS contains 77 individual requirements. Each item must be discussed and then demonstrated. Tasks are listed in the first row, signatures in the second, and the third row indicates that the trainer and trainee agree the task has been thoroughly discussed, as shown in Table 3. Effective demonstration of the task is verified by the signatures in rows five and six. As seen in Table 3, the last three rows are required when a recruiter fails to qualify the first time or a significant period of time has passed and the Chain of Command believes a recruiter needs to re-qualify. A board chaired by the DIVO or the Division Leading Chief Petty Officer (DLCPO) is the final condition for earning the basic recruiter qualification.

Table 3.　　　Sample of Basic Recruiter Personnel Qualification Standards. Adapted from "PQS QUALIFICATION SHEET Basic Recruiter Module," COMNAVCRUITCOMINST 1136.2Q, 2011.

	Discuss/ Initial			Demonstrate/ Initial			Remedial/ Re-qualify		
	TRAINEE	TRAINER	DATE	TRAINEE	TRAINER	DATE	TRAINEE	TRAINER	DATE
d. Monthly training requirements									
e. PQS requirements									
f. In-Rate training requirements									
g. Recruiter Evaluation Board procedures									
h. Individual training record requirements									
i. Complete a Sales Lab using enclosure (7) of COMNAVCRUITCOMINST 1500.4 (place in the training jacket)									

A recruiter is given five opportunities to demonstrate her or his professional Selling Skills (PSS) abilities. Three of the five PSS abilities require that a new recruiter complete a sales lab rated using a PSS Sales Lab worksheet, as seen in Figure 6. The remaining two opportunities are provided implicitly through a school visit and a simulated interview. The three sales labs are conducted by the DIVO, a Navy Lieutenant with minimal recruiting experience, the DLCPO, a Career Recruiting Force Petty Officer or Chief with mid-level experience, and the Leading Petty Officer (LPO), who is either a Fleet or Career Recruiter with varied levels of experience. The two additional training opportunities, the school visit and the interview, are conducted with the LPO. The final qualification for basic recruiter PQS is a board with the DLCPO or DIVO.

The format of the Advanced Recruiter PQS mirrors that of the basic recruiter PQS. The PQS consists of twelve total sections with one section dealing explicitly with the sales process. Within the twelve sections are 74 total tasks in this secondary PQS with more emphasis on the more intricate phases of selling including drawbacks, indifference, and the use of the Navy Recruiting Simulation tool (NRST). Attendance of the command-executed Professional Selling Application workshop and a board chaired by the Assistant Chief Recruiter or the Chief Recruiter is the culminating requirement to earn this qualification (COMNAVCRUITCOMINST 1136.2Q, 2011).

Not all recruiters will be able to meet the prescribed guidelines. Any recruiter who cannot meet the basic recruiter PQS within the first three months of their tour or nine months for their advanced PQS will be evaluated. The Chain of Command will meet with any recruiter who has not achieved this PQS to address performance weaknesses and training shortfalls in a Recruiter Evaluation Board (REB), (COMNAVCRUITCOMINST 1136.2Q, 2011). If a recruiter continually falls below recruiting standards, they will be transferred out of recruiting or put in support role and lose their SDAP (COMNAVCRUITCOMINST 5400.2E, 2003).

If a fleet sailor is successful in earning both their basic and advance recruiter qualifications, they have required all mandated PQS requirements for their 36-month tour. With the completion of this requirement, they become fully qualified production recruiters, the billet they took upon assignment to recruiting. Additional leadership

positions are available to recruiters, and they have PQS requirements associated with them; however, a command can only recommend that a recruiter pursue advanced qualifications (COMNAVCRUITCOMINST 1136.2Q, 2011). A sailor may be motivated by personal or professional reasons to continue to pursue advanced qualifications to further their own knowledge and versatility, but no punitive action is required for those who do not complete any other requirements.

The initial training continuum, if perfectly executed, could effectively build on the training provided by NORU. Based on Ebbinghaus' theory of forgetting, most information loss had already occurred before the sailor crossed the graduation stage. In the continuum, effective review will increase some knowledge retention (Srivastava, 2006). The basic recruiter PQS, if optimally executed, should satisfy the review requirement. The basic and advanced recruiter PQS are comparable to the lessons provided in the initial training, and if the depth and knowledge provided in those lessons were reinforced in the station, the information that was forgotten would be minimized. If a recruiter, while going through the PQS and specifically the sales lab, were given effective and comprehensive feedback on all strengths and weaknesses, the expected loss of knowledge would be minimized during this preliminary reinforcement training.

2. Personnel Qualification Standards Deficiencies

a. Recruiter Experiences Vary

All recruiters are given the same PQS when they arrive at their station; however, all 1,500 stations across the nation and overseas will not execute training in exactly the same manner. Each experience will vary based on trainers, requirements, knowledge, and experiences. PQS is implemented to standardize important topics to be reinforced; however, even within established topics, variation is possible, based on the knowledge and interest of a trainer. For example, looking back, Table 3 shows one line item on the Basic PQS is "Recruiter Evaluation Board." A recruiter who has experienced an REB is going to discuss their experience differently than a trainer who had no experience with the process. While the REB provides a benign example, the implications can be applied to each of the 77 line items on the basic recruiter PQS.

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b. Broad Signature Authority

Based on the Personnel Qualification Standards instruction, any person who has already achieved the applicable qualification is authorized to sign off on completion or demonstration of tasks listed on the PQS (COMNAVCRUITCOMINST 1136.2Q, 2011). If a recruiter has their advance PQS board on Tuesday and passes, Wednesday that recruiter is able to sign the same PQS for any other recruiter who is still working on this PQS. While some task items are specifically assigned for the LPO, D-LCPO or DIVO, most can be signed by anyone holding that qualification. A newly qualified recruiter with six months onboard likely will not be able to provide the appropriate training and feedback required to make a trainee comprehensively knowledgeable on a line item. However, their signature verifies a trainee understood the material and was able to execute the requirement in accordance with recruiting standards.

c. Chain of Command Gaps in Training

Requirements specifically executed by the senior chain of command can be hindered by their lack of experience or training. For example, the Division Officer who has to conduct a sales lab with the hopeful recruiter does not have to be proficient in PSS to qualify for the position as Division Officer (COMNAVCRUITCOMINST 1136.2Q, Encl 3, 2011). Division Officers receive PSS training in the schoolhouse prior to their own recruiting responsibility as Officer Recruiter, but outside of their biannual training, they have no requirement to maintain PSS knowledge or skills (COMNAVCRUITCOMINST 1500.4N, Encl 5, 2011). It is expected the DIVLCPO, with mid-level experience, will be able to identify learning gaps, but it is unlikely those skills have been formally tested or reinforced since their schoolhouse experience prior to reporting. Finally, the LPO is the third sales lab; the LPO is likely a junior CRF member or a fleet recruiter. While, ideally, the person most knowledgeable and most qualified is assigned to run the station, that requirement can be bypassed due to seniority or manpower needs.

d.   *Knowledge Demonstration Instead of Skill Demonstration*

The culminating requirement for both levels of PQS is a board with three senior personnel reviewing line items and verifying that the topics on the PQS were reviewed and comprehension was demonstrated. Recruiting, while based on knowledge, is actually a skill that depends on the ability to utilize PSS, support with Navy benefits, and follow the appropriate standard operating procedures. A board asking questions in a limited period of time will not be able to completely and accurately measure recruiting skill. A board experience tests only the knowledge and understanding of the recruiting policies and selling procedures that support the skill.

e.   *Time Limitations*

The final PQS issue is the limitation of time for both the trainee and trainer.   The primary job of the LPO, DLCPO, and DIVO is production. While training supports production, training can only occur when time allows (COMNAVCRUITCOMINST 5400.1H, 2011) . Recruiting success at every level is measured by contract production. The primary job of anyone assigned to recruiting is to gain a contract or ensure someone ships to boot camp on time. A new recruiter who is not yet qualified will be trained when production allows, and by the operational situation, not the situation outlined in the PQS. The result is that steps or processes can be done out of order to handle the situation; however, it is not the way someone new should be introduced to a process (Sisson, 2001). Limited time for the trainee will result in a great deal of forgetting and minimal feedback. Without the appropriate level of review and feedback in the extended time between the initial training and qualifying as a recruiter, most information learned in the schoolhouse could be forgotten (Hurlock & Montague, 1982).

3.   Post-PQS Training Requirements

After qualification, the recruiter's day no longer revolves around the requirements mandated by the PQS. Qualified sailors are now production recruiters and therefore their main job is recruiting. Their days are spent primarily on prospecting, doing school visits, conducting interviews, and taking applicants to the Military Entrance Processing Station

(MEPS). The training continuum is a combination of as-needed, on-the-job training and training completed in accordance with a published schedule (COMNAVCRUITCOMINST 1500.4N, 2008). Daily training is conducted at the trainer's and trainee's convenience, either when an issue needs to be addressed or during the LPO's Daily Production Review (DPR). The recruiter's primary job and measure of success at this point is to contract new sailors into the service.

Weekly training must be documented during the job for all recruiters. Recruiters have a written schedule, or planner, that documents their plan for their week to include prospecting, interviews, and administration (COMNAVCRUITCOMINST 1130.8J, 2011). The planner is reviewed and approved by the LPO prior to the beginning of the workweek. Training is annotated with a purple outline and must be included on the planner so time can be dedicated to train in emergent requirements. The planner can be modified as needed during the week to accommodate scheduling changes; but training cannot be removed from the schedule (COMNAVCRUITCOMINST 1130.8J, 2011). Training topics are documented in the recruiter's training binder, and both the trainee and trainer sign the form indicating training was completed (COMNAVCRUITCOMINST 1500.4N, 2008).

Additional recruiting topics and training requirements are assigned by month, with most topics staggered throughout the year. The only monthly requirement is "identified weaknesses and emergent requirements" (COMNAVCRUITCOMINST 1500.4N, 2008, encl 1)and the PSS Sales Lab. The sales lab is conducted following the worksheet in Figure 6. Identified weaknesses and emergent weaknesses are an open-ended opportunity for training on any recruiting requirement, if that is a required skill or knowledge within the previous month. However, as discussed below, the opportunity to recruit does not always occur monthly. If PSS is not recognized as a weakness or even a requirement to be successful as a recruiter, the training will not occur.

The only formal classroom requirements for PSS-specific training—required beyond recruiter qualification—is a monthly sales lab and one-day course called PSS Applications, according to the "Desired/Optimum PSS System Training Sequence for Navy Recruiting Personnel" diagram seen in Figure 6. Found in

COMNAVCRUITCOMINST 1500.4N, this is the PSS core skill reinforcement training (Encl 5, 2008). Trainers must attend the "rain the rainer" (T-3) course to be qualified to instruct this reinforcement training. Specific guidelines are not provided for the execution of PSS applications training, which is determined by the individual conducting the training. A recruiter must attend PSS applications every four to six months to be considered current on the training. The Sales Performance Tool Kit (SPTK) is an additional suggested requirement in the optimal training sequence, and the suggested timeframe for training is "in accordance with PQS" (COMNAVCRUITCOMINST 1500.4N, encl 5, 2008). However, the PQS has no requirement to use the SPTK.

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Opening                  Probing                Supporting              Closing
__Proposed Agenda    __  Used Open &          __ Acknowledged         __ Reviewed
                         Closed to explore       the Need                Previously
                         the customer's:                                 Accepted Benefits
__ Stated the        __  Circumstances        __ Described            __ Proposed next
value to the                                     Relevant Features       steps for you &
customer                                         & Benefits              the applicant
__ Checked for       __  Needs                __ Checked for          __ Checked for
Acceptance                                       Acceptance              Acceptance
                     __  USED A CLOSED
                         PROBE TO CONFIRM
                         THE NEED


Need #1      _____
Feature:     _____   Benefits: _____ , _____ , _____ , _____
Need #2      _____
Feature:     _____   Benefits: _____ , _____ , _____ , _____
Need #3      _____
Feature:     _____   Benefits: _____ , _____ , _____ , _____


__ Skepticism:__Acknowledge the Concern __Offered Relevant Proof
__ Checked for Acceptance

__ Misunderstanding:__Confirmed the need behind the concern
Supported the Need by:__ Acknowledging the need __ Describing relevant
features and benefits __ Checking for acceptance

__ Drawbacks:__Acknowledge the concern __Refocus on the bigger picture
Outweigh with previously accepted benefits __ Checking for acceptance

__ Overcoming Customer Indifference:__Acknowledged the customers point
of view __ Requested permission to probe
__Probed to create customer awareness of needs:

    1. Explored the customers circumstances for:__Opportunities__Effects
    2. Confirmed the existence of a need
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Figure 5.   Sample of PSS Sales Lab Grading Worksheet. Adapted from "PSS Sales Lab Grading Worksheet," COMNAVCRUITCOMINST 1500.4N, 2011.

4. Post-PQS Training Requirements Deficiencies

a. *Training Subjective to Trainer*

The training continuum is now directly in the hands of the chain of command, including the recruiters in the station, LPO, DIV-LCPO, and DIVO. Based on the qualification process, the recruiter is determined to have the knowledge and capability to be productive. Transforming that knowledge into action is the responsibility of those with whom the sailor works.. The opportunity to train, reinforce, and develop skills is provided through the OJT requirements, monthly requirements, and a semi-annual course on selling skills. A great majority of training and reviewing is done locally, depending on the capability of the person providing the training.

b. *Lack of Quality Feedback*

Sales labs can be a great tool to training, but they may not always be effective. Although all the PSS steps are evaluated, the outline of the form suggests the participants go through the required steps of PSS dogmatically to successfully complete the requirement. There are no limitations as to how it is conducted, where it is conducted, and who can administer and grade a sales lab. The only requirement is that one be conducted monthly (COMNAVCRUITCOMINST 1500.4N, 2008). Two recruiters who have a long day ahead of them may feel they are helping each other out by giving each other cursory sales labs with no constructive feedback—this is as ineffective as a recruiter who does not know how to provide useful feedback or cannot effectively recognize knowledge gaps.

c. *Leadership Coaching Weaknesses*

Personnel in leadership positions do not automatically know how to train their people and may not have the opportunity to develop those skills during their recruiting tour. To support leadership's ability to effectively coach and train, both the LPO and DIVLCPO are required to take a two-day Professional Selling Skills Coaching (PSC) course to improve their own abilities to train others (COMNAVCRUITCOMINST 1500.4N, 2008). Similar to the PSA curriculum, the course is provided by someone

within the command who is T-3 qualified. This course is required at least once during a leadership tour. After attending the PSC course, the requirement is either PSA or PSC attendance once every six months. There is no other training required for leadership on the most effective ways to provide training and feedback (COMNAVCRUITCOMINST 1500.4N, 2008).

d.   *Underutilization of the Navy Recruiting Simulation Tool (NRST)*

The NRST is a standardized simulation that can provide useful practice and repetition of basic selling skills. A 2010 Master's thesis by LCDR Julia Jones found that one-third of recruiters felt the NRST helped improve their selling skills (Jones, 2010). Recruiters are first introduced to the NRST during training at NORU to reinforce their initial training. After graduation, there is only one requirement to conduct additional training on the simulator. This NRST requirement is a task associated with the advanced recruiter PQS. Simulation is a cost-effective tool for reinforcing skills and reducing skill decay (Blanchard & Thacker, 1999). While the tool is available to the fleet and introduced at NORU, the 2010 survey by Jones found only 40 percent of recruiters report ever utilizing the NRST as a training tool.

5.   Training Support Assets

The direct chain of command is not the only training support available to recruiters. Both the NRD and NRC have personnel whose only job is to support the recruiters in their training continuum. The Recruiting District has one billet dedicated to training; the Command Trainer (CT) is the only job at the command whose primary job is training. The CT is a direct report to the Executive Officer whom is ultimately responsible for the training as the NRD's Training Officer (COMNAVCRUITCOMINST 5400.1H, 22011). According to the COMNAVCRUTINST 5400.1H, the main function of the Command Trainer is "Responsible for the execution of the NAVCRUITDIST training program as directed by the Executive Officer. Provides training to command personnel, maintains command training files and tracking systems, and ensures compliance with applicable instructions and policies" (chap. 11, p. 17). The CT, by instruction, is a Career Recruiting Force Chief Petty Officer and above with over 36 months of DLCPO

experience. The CT is a solid asset to support training deficiencies when able to spend a great deal of time with individuals and stations to identify training and knowledge gaps.

One person is assigned as Command Trainer for each District; however, districts have an average of 183 enlisted recruiters on production (Sladyk, 2011). The CT may be limited in their ability to spend a great deal of time with each station and separate individuals. Production deficiencies can mandate how a Command Trainer's time is spent out in the field. Production issues, though not necessarily related to PSS skills, can demand more attention than another station or recruiter, making goal easily. A station that is successful due to external forces, such as propensity, influencers, and market, is low priority for a trainer, yet they may be a greater risk for skill decay than a more poorly-producing recruiting station. Due to the recruiter-to-trainer ratio, a trainer will have to prioritize time; not all stations receive the same amount of time and support.

Externally, NRC has fifteen personnel dedicated to training and supporting all 26 districts (A. H. Beaster, personal communication February 10, 2012). The N71 team of NRC is multifunctional; they conduct both inspections and training throughout the districts yearly. The team consists of a combination of Career Recruiting Force enlisted personnel and recruiting-experienced officers (COMNAVCRUITCOMINST 5400.1H). Training is always conducted in conjunction with inspections; however, not every visit is an inspection. Districts can request a personnel visit to provide training on any recruiting topic or issues ranging from individual training to group training (COMNAVCRUITCOMINST 1500.4N, 2008). In 2011, 179 training visits were completed; eleven of these were requested for training on PSS-related issues (Beaster, 2012). Additionally, Webinars are conducted by the N71 team, some of which are required, while others are optional. Webinars cover all recruiting topics, from selling skills and applicant processing, to recent program changes.

NRC has created a strong team of subject matter experts to train recruiters and leadership throughout the country; however, they have some capability limits. With 26 districts, 1,500 stations, and over 4,500 enlisted personnel, a limited amount of support can be provided by NRC's 15-person training team within a year (Sladyk, 2011). The Webinars can reach all recruiters throughout the country; however, they have their own

limitations. Webinars provide information, although it is not tailored to individual weaknesses. Further, webinars cannot address skill deficiencies, only knowledge gaps. Webinars are provided at the convenience of the training team, not the recruiter, so the training may actually interrupt recruiters more than assist them. Finally, no measurement of learning is available from this training. Attendance is reported and noted, but, that does not automatically translate to participation or learning.

6.   Reinforcement and Repetition

A key piece of being able to reinforce these skills on the job is the need and ability to recruit new applicants. In the current recruiting environment, recruiters may be limited in their opportunity to prospect and train new recruits. In 2010, recruiting has limited the number of contracts allowed in a year to 105 percent of the goal. The result is disparity between the number of recruiters and the contracts available to write. As seen in Table 4, based on the number of recruiters and available contracts, each recruiter had the opportunity (on average) to write 10 (.83 PPR) contracts in Fiscal Year 2011. Fewer recruiting opportunities diminish the ability of a recruiter to reinforce PSS skills on the job.

Table 4.   Past and Projected Manning Availability and Contract Requirements.
Adapted from "Highlights of the Department of the Navy FY 2012 Budget,"
Office of the Budget Department of the Navy, 2011.

	FY 2010	FY 2011 PB Req	FY 2012
# of Recruiters	4,100	4,000	3,840
# of Recruits (New Contracts)	42,830	38,420	41,584
# of Recruits per Recruiter	10.4	9.6	10.8
Size of Delayed Entry Program (DEP) (Beginning of FY)	19,093	19,319	17,850
Accession mission	34,140	35,100	35,700
Size of DEP as percent of accessions	55.9%	55.0%	50.0%

These numbers do not accurately reflect the recruiting picture, however, because recruiter numbers are averaged, the actual goals change throughout the year, and goal is

not level-loaded throughout the year. Recruiting is seasonal, with a majority of recruiting occurring in the summer when 40 percent of the goal is actually met, while the first three quarters have 60 percent of the goal distributed throughout the nine-month period (Sladyk, 2011). Individual districts determine actual goal assignment for the month prior to the start of the fiscal year. An example of the delta in recruiters and goal is exhibited in Table 5. The goal assignment results in small variations of the ratio of goals to recruiters; yet, a strong disparity still exists between the number of recruiters and goals throughout the year. Based on estimates that take into account the yearly deviations, the average available PPR for a recruiter is closer to .58, or the ability to write a contract during only seven out of twelve months. This is based on fair share, or everyone having the opportunity to contract an applicant. Nevertheless, the principle of a reward system, discussed below, is based on having some recruiters more successful than others. This would lower the average PPR for recruiters even more.

Table 5.   Example of Possible Goal to Production Recruiters Available Ratio in a
                Fiscal Year. Adapted from "Historical Enlisted Summaries," Sladyk, 2011.
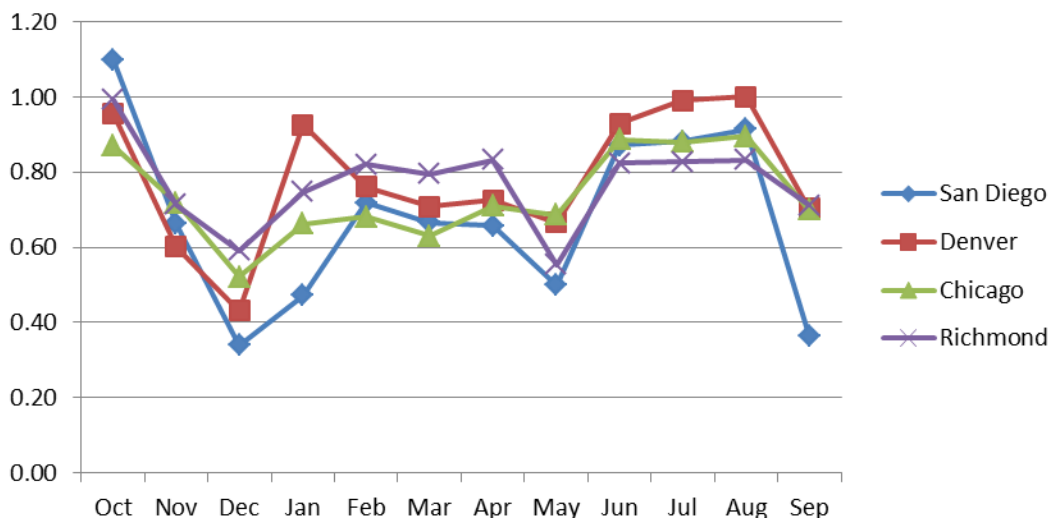
Finally, repetition and reinforcement of skills may not always enhance the desired training. Without appropriate feedback, reinforcement may interfere with the appropriate skills (Hurlock & Montague, 1982). This reinforcement can fail for a number of reasons,

including a situation where the recruiter makes a mistake that is not corrected, or worse, a mistake is reinforced by their prospect. Another failed reinforcement is the case of a recruit who is already 'sold" on the Navy. If a potential recruit is looking for a job and has already evaluated the military, this applicant may have already decided to join. The recruiter can consequently skip most of the selling process. This streamlined approach by the recruiter is subsequently reinforced through a contract and never corrected through feedback, resulting in what amounts to ineffective reinforcement. The chain of command recognizes PPR as an indicator of successful training, regardless of what behavior the contract is actually reinforcing.

B.   TRAINING PIPELINE AND BLOOM'S TAXONOMY

Theoretically, Bloom's taxonomy is intertwined with the recruiter and, as the experience and training of a recruiter increases, the sailor will move up the hierarchy of the taxonomy. As discussed previously, NORU provides the first three phases of Bloom's taxonomy: remembering, understanding, and applying. At the same time, the station is responsible for developing the advanced understanding and application of selling skills while reinforcing the foundation already established at NORU (Anderson and Krathwohl, 2001). The two learning paths marry nicely, and if PPR is the perfect way to capture mastery of recruiting, the progression of a recruiter can be followed to the pinnacle.

The training provided within the Navy Recruiting Station is expected to meet the needs of analyzing, evaluating, and creating (Anderson & Krathwohl, 2001). The actual hands-on training provided through physically recruiting enhances the recruiter's ability to understand how the selling steps all work together. It gives recruiters the opportunity to understand why they have to identify the needs of a prospective sailor before the benefits of the Navy or its programs can be discussed. Evaluating is likely the most straightforward aspect of this taxonomy, and one the recruiter will use often. Evaluation allows the recruiter to determine if a recruit is suitable for the Navy, or if they are able to sell the recruit on the military, or even if another approach to selling would be more effective. The ability to evaluate is critical to a recruiter and to time management. Finally,

creating allows recruiters to deviate from previously learned material and establish new ideas that might help them perform on a daily basis, especially when they must deal with non-standard recruiting issues.

The greatest hindrance to identifying whether the training continuum leads and supports skill mastery is the lack of skill measurements within the recruiting system. Recruiting has several methods to measure learning within the first three phases of Bloom's taxonomy. *Remembering, understanding,* and *applying* are tested through the board process and the required Sales Labs. However, for the most part, *analysis, evaluation* and the ability to *create,* the final three phases to true mastery, are never tested, identified, or measured.

In lieu of unique tools to measure actual learning and mastery of selling skills, PPR is considered mastery of PSS skills. The ability to write a contract assumes the final three phases of learning, in accordance with Bloom's taxonomy, have been achieved. PSS skill is not the only attribute responsible for strong production. Yet, according to a 2004 study, the correlation of .52 between PSS skills and production indicates a relationship between PSS and the ability to secure a contract (Bearden, Borman, Penney), while a strong correlation it is not perfect. PSS is obviously not the characteristics contributing to recruiter success; therefore, it seems inaccurate to equate recruiting success solely to PSS skills. Using PPR as the only definition of effective training is an incomplete explanation, particularly in the recruiting environment, which can be influenced by any number of external and internal forces.

C.   MOTIVATION

Motivation is a vital driver to both the trainee and the trainer. Information can be provided, as needed, but if the trainee is not motivated or sees no benefit to changing behavior, training will not be effective. As discussed, several motivation theories explain what drives a person to learn. For example, Maslow's hierarchy of needs, Herzberg's hygiene factors, Vroom's expectancy theory and goal-setting theory (Kressler, 2003) all align with recruiters and the recruiting environment. Thus, understanding *why* recruiters learn is as important as understanding *how* they learn.

Maslow's hierarchy of needs states that humans are driven by six factors, and as one factor is satisfied, we move to the next, higher need. The main needs to be satisfied in a working environment are levels 4, 5, and 6, which are the needs of belonging, esteem, and self-actualization (Kressler, 2003). Employees hope to gain acceptance from their peers, recognition for their accomplishments, and a feeling of reaching their potential. If a person believes that a need will be met through attaining new skills, he or she will be motivated to learn.

The first need, a sense of belonging, can be achieved through meeting a goal by working as a team. Recruiting stations are normally small, with a group or four to six recruiting personnel in a station. Goals are normally assigned by a station instead of individually. This team concept of responsibility and production enhances the opportunity to work and succeed as a team. According to the 2010 Recruiter Quality of Life Surveys conducted by JAMRS, 74 percent of recruiters felt their co-workers helped them to achieve their goals. Additionally, 66percent of the recruiters reported good support from their supervisor. As indicated by the survey, a prevailing sense of support can be found within the average station and chain of command. This implies that recruiter, for the most part, gain a sense of belonging.

Esteem is next in Maslow's hierarchy, and it can be met through accomplishing a goal or by being recognized for one's efforts. The JAMRS survey reported that 73percent of Navy recruiters met mission at least nine of twelve months in the previous fiscal year. While that alone might be a good indicator that esteem needs are being met, other survey questions paint a less certain picture of goal accomplishment and feelings typically associated with esteem. A recruiter who has to submit just one contract every other month can reply honestly that they achieved their goal over 75 percent of the time; yet, achieving a goal so easily may not translate into a sense of accomplishment. When recruiters were asked how satisfied they were in the recruiting environment, 45 percent responded with a *satisfied* to *very satisfied* rating. This compares with the military average of 77percent, and suggests that need fulfillment in the recruiting environment may not necessarily equate to simply making goals. In fact, as seen in Figure 7, only 41 percent of East Coast recruiters and 30 percent of West Coast recruiters said that they

would stay in recruiting if they were given the opportunity to transfer to another job. It is difficult to find a positive link between these results and the fulfillment of esteem needs among recruiters. At the same time, unless esteem needs are being met, one must conclude that the hierarchy has somehow stalled.

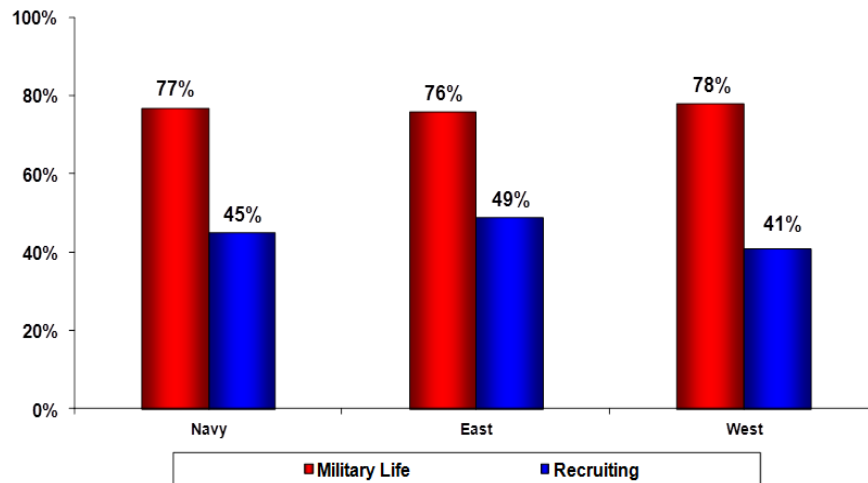Figure 6.   The Percent of Recruiters Who Reported Satisfaction with Recruiting Life. Adapted from "2010 Recruiter Quality of Life Survey, Joint Advertising Market Research Study," 2010.
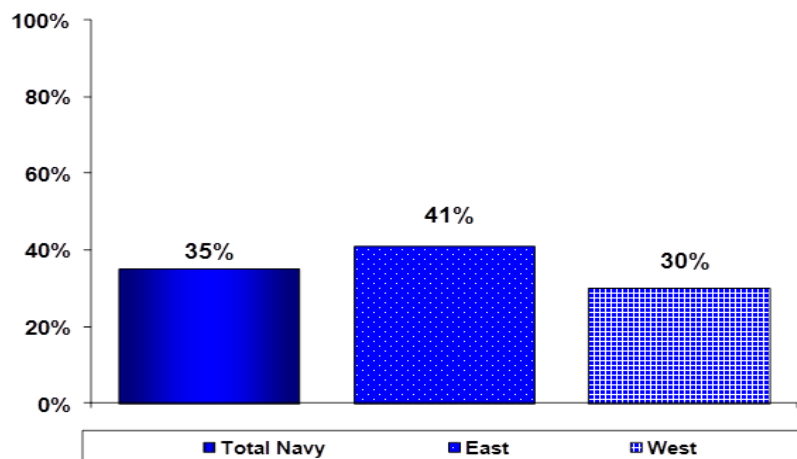

Figure 7.   The Percentage of Recruiters Who Would Remain in Recruiting if Eligible to Pick Another Assignment. Adapted from "2010 Recruiter Quality of Life Survey, Joint Advertising Market Research Study," 2010.

Herzberg's hygiene factors coincide with the comparison of the findings in Maslow's hierarchy of needs (Aswathappa, 2010). The motivation factors can be satisfied through goal achievement and teamwork, but the hygiene factors may be causing recruiter dissatisfaction. As indicated by survey results, 31 percent of recruiters reported dissatisfaction with their working environment, based on a recruiter's personal goals. If the requirements or policies of recruiting interfere with personal goals, hygiene factors will be viewed negatively. Another possible hygiene issue is the additional pay for recruiters. According to the JAMRS survey, a third of recruiters felt that the added pay was not enough, at least based on the job requirements. As discussed previously, motivators only enhance the job, while some hygiene factors that can result in overall dissatisfaction with the job can reduce motivation to succeed (Aswathappa, 2010).

Vroom's expectancy theory and goal setting, as viewed within the current recruiting environment, provide mixed support for internal motivation to training and reinforcing skills on the job. A critical aspect of Vroom's theory is the perceived outcome, as recruiters believe they will achieve their goals. Another critical piece of expectancy is whether the result is seen as having value to the person; the JAMRS study found that only 63 percent of recruiters felt recruiting could enhance or end their career. Similarly, for goal setting, a goal must be achievable yet provide a challenge to attain. A favorable recruiting environment may support goal-setting by making goals achievable for some, while for others these goals may seem far less personally fulfilling. As with goal loading, the process may vary from time to time, geographic location of the recruiter, and the qualifications of prospective recruits.

D. THE INCENTIVE PROCESS

The current incentive plan, Enlisted Recruiter Incentive System (ERIS), is based on the Freeman Plan and rewards recruiters who acquire highly valued quality contracts throughout the fiscal year. Recruiters receive points based on the type of contracts acquired and shipped throughout the fiscal year. According to COMNAVCRUITCOMINST 1650.1B Navy Recruiting Command Awards Manual, published in 2008, a Navy Achievement Medal (NAM) is given to a recruiter who earns

over 80 ERIS points, and a Navy Commendation Medal (NCM) is awarded to a recruiter who earns 120 points or greater. Table 6 shows the points given for each type of contract. As seen here, the minimum number of points per contract is 2 (for a non-diverse recruit with a lower score on the enlistment test), while the most points that can be earned is 8 (for a woman with a high score on the enlistment test who chooses the nuclear field). Based on the points system to earn 80 ERIS points, a recruiter would have to write between 8 and 40 contracts with no attrition. To earn an NCM, a recruiter would need between 15 and 60 contracts with no attrition.

Table 6.   Point Designation for the Enlisted Recruiter Incentive System. Adapted from "Recruiter Incentive System (RIS)" COMNAVCRUITCOMINST 1650.1B, 2011.

CATEGORY	SUBCATEGORY	POINTS
New Contract	NCO	2
	Prior Service	2
Quality Bonus	TSC 1 (93-99)	3
	TSC 2 (65-92)	2
	TSC 3 (50-64)	1
	FTCU	1
Spec-ops Bonus	WC-SB/EOD/ND/AIRR/SO	1
Nuke Bonus	Nuke	2
NROTC	NROTC-Selected Application	1
	NROTC-Selected	2
Accession	SELRES Affiliation	2
	General Officer/CEC	3xApplication Value
	JAG	2xApplication Value
	SO/Chaplain/Cyber Officer	4xApplication Value
	Medical Officer	4xApplication Value
Reductions	IM LOSS	2+Original Contract
	1st Out Month Loss	1+Original Contract
	2nd Out Month or greater	Original Contract
	Spec-ops Reclassification(Preventable)	Original Contract
	OCS Attrite(preventable)	-10
Officer Processor Bonus	Officer Int to Kit <30 days	5
	Officer Int to Kit <45 days	2

As previously discussed, Asch (1990) determined that the incentive system was effective for recruiters who thought they could achieve the requirements. However, even prior to recruiting caps, there were cyclical challenges to the motivational power of the incentive system. Recruiters who did not begin recruiting at the beginning of a fiscal

year, or would be gone prior to the end of the fiscal year, would likely be limited in their ability to earn enough points for an award. Today, those same challenges exist, and they are compounded by the current recruiting environment.

The Admiral's Accelerator award is a shorter-term award tied to quarterly success. This is not based on ERIS points, but net number of contracts and the current needs of the Navy. The awards instruction states that the Admiral's Accelerator award be contingent on the "whole person," although the actual guidance relies on the number of contracts written. The award for this achievement includes a Flag Coin, Flag Letter of Commendation (FLOC), and special liberty. Criteria for the Admiral's Accelerator for the first quarter of FY 2011 established in COMNAVCRUITCOMNOTE 1650 dated October 21, 2011, includes:

> Enlisted Recruiter Active Component (AC) or Reserve Component (RC). An award presented to the top enlisted recruiter of each Navy Recruiting District (NAVCRUITDIST) who contracts the highest (net) number of Total Test Category Upper (TTCU) contracts and diversity Navy Reserve Officer Training Candidate (NROTC) applications. (para a)

These incentives not only have short-lived implications, but they can change the course of a sailor's career. While incentives such a liberty and a flag coin are nice, the FLOC, NAM and NCM actually add points to a sailor's final multiple (1, 2, and 3 points, respectively) for advancement (BUPERSINST 1430.16F). Additionally, meritorious promotions are available to sailors who have excelled during their recruiting tour. Production is still a vital piece of recruiting, regardless of the environment; a productive recruiter is more likely to be recognized through awards and early promotion. Ultimately, if recruiters are supported in their production goals to achieve awards, other recruiters will be even more limited in their ability to recruit.

Approximately 500 production NCMs and NAMs are awarded to recruiters each year. While recognition and rewards are solid ways to motivate and incentivize production, they may be actually undermining their purpose. Based on awards, the previously addressed .58 PPR would be further reduced due to lack of ability to write

contracts. Fewer available contracts for recruiters can result in both reduced motivation for recruiters as well as in fewer opportunities for recruiters to reinforce and practice their recruiting skills.

E. CHAPTER SUMMARY

The recruiter-training continuum has several interrelated facets, including basic training, motivation, and environment. In an ideal situation, trainers would provide instruction shaped by the PQS, recruiters would be motivated by challenging yet achievable incentives, and the recruiting environment would reinforce training, while allowing ample opportunities for recruiters to practice and sharpen their selling skills. However, no system is perfect, and possible flaws in all facets of the current continuum may lead to widening gaps in training that will have long-lasting repercussions.

Within the first six months, recruiters' activities are regulated by training requirements specifically listed in the PQS. While the PQS is essential to standardizing recruiter training, it cannot ensure that all recruiters are presented with all the information and training required to fully develop basic recruiting skills. Trainers are limited by time, their own experience, and the capability of the learner. Additionally, the final requirement for qualification, the board, is mainly a knowledge test, instead of a verification of recruiting skill. The synthesis of recruiting knowledge to recruiting skill is a critical step that should be demonstrated to earn the recruiter qualification.

After the monitored initial six-months, or when the Advanced Recruiter Qualification is earned, the training continuum is much less structured. With few exceptions, training is provided as needed to address performance deficiencies. Nevertheless, recruiting is primarily independent duty, so often a recruiter is not directly observed by someone who can offer coaching or feedback on real-time performance. Feedback is critical to the continued reinforcement of skills and correction of weaknesses; without this critical piece of on-the-job assessment, skill decay can occur rapidly.

Motivation influences how sailors work and why they strive to achieve goals. Although motivation is an internal driver, it can also be influenced by external rewards

and opportunities. If a goal, such as writing one contract a month, is not attainable, or if recruiters see no benefit in achieving this goal, they will be less motivated to learn better ways to recruit or correct any failings. Motivation is a key for pushing recruiters to succeed, and meaningful training enables these recruiters to accomplish their objectives..

Incentives can improve motivation and push recruiters to excel, but only if these incentives are seen as realistically obtainable. The current recruiting environment is unique because, while goals may be established, external factors can prevent recruiters from achieving their assigned goals. If quotas are not available for contracts, a recruiter may be assigned a non-production-related goal; alternatively, they may go several months with no goals at all. If goals and incentives do not work in tandem—so that meeting goals earns the incentive awards or recognition—they will be ultimately less influential in motivating a recruiter.

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VI.   SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Navy recruiting is truly the backbone of the fleet. Simply put, the future of the organization rests upon the recruits of today who will become the Navy's leaders of tomorrow. Navy recruiters are thus charged with bringing in the best and the brightest young people available, regardless of the current environment. To support the Navy's recruiters in meeting this challenge, Navy Recruiting Command has created a solid training continuum. Now, with the helping hand of a weak national economy, Navy recruiting is flourishing. This presents the perfect opportunity to reexamine the training continuum and experiment with methods for improvement.

A.   SUMMARY

Recruiting is one of the most difficult and most important jobs within the United States Navy. Sailors are asked to help build the best Navy of the future that they can, with minimal training, in a unique, non-military environment. At the same time, recruiting success has been cyclical throughout the years, based on both external and internal influences. Since the start of America's economic recession in 2007, these factors have allowed for a strong recruiting environment; however, as history shows, the good fortunes of Navy recruiting can shift quite quickly. When the recruiting environment ultimately changes, recruiters will need to dig deeply yet again into their acquired skills, training, and experience to keep the fleet properly manned.

The training continuum for recruiters in 2012 includes 25 days at Navy Recruiting Orientation Unit (NORU) learning recruiting basics. Once a recruiter has arrived at the final Navy Recruiting Station (NRS), schoolhouse instruction is supplemented with formal and informal on-the-job training. Two Personnel Qualification Standards (PQS) requirements are employed for sailors in their initial six months. The two initial requirements are Basic and Advanced Recruiter qualification. Basic Recruiter PQS familiarizes the recruiter with day-to-day operations and the Chain of Command, as well

as reinforces the training provided at NORU. The Advanced Recruiter PQS refreshes knowledge and supports the recruiter in transforming basic knowledge into selling skills (COMNAVCRUITCOMINST 1500.4N, 2008).

Upon completion of the primary PQS requirements, the main training for a recruiter is on-the-job, provided as needed to identify and address weaknesses and issues. Additionally, sales labs are conducted monthly and PSS refresher training is provided semi-annually. Recruiting is primarily an independent assignment, so recruiting deficiencies are identified mostly through production difficulties. If a recruiter is not able to meet production requirements, additional training is provided and will also be evaluated through a Recruiter Evaluation Board (REB) (COMNAVCRUITCOMINST 1136.2Q, 2011).

Currently, the Navy utilizes Professional Selling Skills (PSS), an off-the-shelf selling process for recruiters. The fundamental skills and labs are provided at NORU, and the training continuum includes refresher training and advanced application of these skills. The Basic and Advanced Recruiter PQS include line items on the fundamentals of PSS. Recruiters must prove knowledge on basic selling principles and conduct Sales Labs with experienced personnel to prove their selling ability in accordance with the system (COMNAVCRUITCOMINST 1136.2Q, 2011).

Memory of information by trainees tends to fade at a relatively rapid rate without reinforcement of the original training. Indeed, without reinforcement, a person will only retain a fraction of what they originally learned after a month. A recruiter who takes the maximum amount of leave between NORU and the NRS, for example, may only retain 21 percent of what she or he originally learned (Srivastava, 2006). Consistent feedback and repetition are required to maintain previously learned material (Hurlock & Montague, 1982). With appropriate practice and refresher training, learning should be easier to maintain. According to Bloom's taxonomy, mastery of learning occurs in six basic steps: remember, understand, apply, analyze, evaluate, and create (Anderson & Krathwohl, 2001). These six steps represent the learning process from the initial introduction of information (remember) all the way to mastery of a topic (create). Satisfaction of one

level is critical to the ability of the learner to move to the next step. In an optimal training continuum, each step is satisfied. Additionally, learning is a function of motivation and incentives (Logan, 1969).

Motivation is based on both internal and external factors (Logan, 1969). For example, sailors in an ideal learning environment need to have goals that are achievable and desirable to push them to perform. Although people can be motivated by different goals, some fundamental motivators tend to push most. Many people, for instance, are pushed to find a sense of belonging or achievement, which can drive a trainee to learn and practice useful skills. Conversely, if people do not feel their goals are achievable, or that the goals will be appropriately acknowledged or rewarded, they will not be motivated.

Various forms of motivation are used for Navy recruiters. These include monthly recognition in *Recruiter Magazine,* quarterly awards, and end-of-year awards. Such incentives can provide motivation if recruiters find them achievable (Kressler, 2003).

Recruiting has been so successful in the years preceding 2012 that monthly goals were limited to the assigned quota. Unfortunately, monthly goals do not give every recruiter the opportunity to write a contract. Based on fair share throughout the nation, a recruiter can write a contract seven out of twelve months. However, incentives based on the number and type of contract are still sought and earned by recruiters. As some recruiters write several contracts in a month, other recruiters may not be able to write nearly as many. The lack of quotas for recruiters can make personal goals unachievable, and thereby reduce the motivational value of this supposed incentive.

Recruiting skill is measured by a sailor's ability to write a contract. Training is considered effective when a recruiter can achieve the pinnacle requirement: a new, fully-qualified recruit, contracted to join the Navy. Without the ability to measure the actual knowledge, skills, or ability in recruiters throughout their tour, the Production Per Recruiter (PPR) rate is the only measure available to connect training effectiveness with individual performance. Consequently, it is quite difficult to discern if the training itself is effectively comprehensive for a recruiter's success throughout the 36-month tour. In a

normal recruiting environment, lack of production is an accepted indicator of training deficiencies; however, when recruiting rides the crest of a successful cycle, assisted greatly by an economic recession or some other temporary factor, production becomes far less useful in determining the value of training or recruiter performance.

B.   RECOMMENDATIONS

Navy Recruiting, to achieve and maintain appropriate Professional Selling Skills (PSS) levels, should thoroughly analyze the effectiveness of the current training continuum. An understanding of current PSS ability and practice is critical to fully appreciate the need for refresher training. The following recommendations, generated from the findings of this study, can support the continued training for recruiters as well as improve ability and production throughout a recruiter's tour.   The recommendations identify enhancements that support the sailor's complete learning experience, to include fundamental instruction, motivation, and incentives.

1.   Should the Navy Reinstitute Recruiter Refresher Training (RRT)?

a.   Conclusion

The current training continuum, as executed in accordance with COMNAVCRUITCOMINST 1500.4N (2008) and COMNAVCRUITCOMINST 1136.2Q (2011), can be said to satisfy the training needs of recruiters to maintain and improve their skills throughout their tour. However, this conclusion is based on optimal training, motivation, repetition, and feedback, in a real-world training environment. At the same time, an assessment of "optimal" may be far too optimistic, if not unrealistic. Many possible knowledge gaps can exist between the trainer and the learner. As previously observed, learning is based on more factors than just the amount of training provided; it also depends on the quality of training, the motivation of the learner, and the feedback provided (Hurlock & Montague, 1982). Additional refresher training alone will not automatically result in better PSS skills; the training should support motivation and provide incentives to the recruiter.

Continued training must be seen as important by the learner, and it should be impressed upon the recruiting fleet that continued training leads to continued success. The message should originate from NRC and be passed throughout all districts and stations. *Navy Recruiter Magazine*, a bimonthly publication, begins each edition with a note "From the Admiral," a personal message from the Commander of Navy Recruiting Command. While the message usually contains accolades, it also informs recruiters about issues considered important to NRC. Training is rarely mentioned in the note, although the message is related to recruiting success and the critical aspects of recruiting that lead to success. Of the past twelve publications of the *Navy Recruiter Magazine,* training is mentioned only once—in the January/February 2011 issue—when then NRC Admiral Craig Faller mentioned, "knowing your systems and processes!" (Faller, p. 4). Emphasizing the importance of training at this level would have strong residual effects throughout recruiting. It is appropriate that the message begins at the top and everyone is made aware of the importance of training. Recruiting success is tightly defined as production success, with the assumption that a successful recruiter is a well-trained recruiter. PSS knowledge will not always lead to a contract, and a poorly-trained recruiter can write a contract. It is important to define and measure knowledge and success separately. The assumption of equality of the two terms can easily lead to increased skill decay and neglect of a sailor's training needs. This skill decay will have long-term implications, since the learning continuum for all recruiters is heavily reliant on support and feedback from co-workers and supervisors (Hurlock & Montague, 1982.

The PQS, while a solid foundation for standardizing training topics, does not do enough to capture actual recruiting skill. The culminating requirement of a board can only measure rote knowledge, not the actual application of knowledge in a recruiting situation. Obviously, knowledge is important, but demonstrating the synthesis of this knowledge to application is critical in identifying a recruiter who has the skills to become a successful recruiter. The board provides recruiting leadership the opportunity to identify those who need additional training on PSS; however, the format of the board limits its ability to actually observe recruiting skill.

On-the-job training is subject to the standards of the trainer. In 1,500 stations across 26 districts, many different training standards are defined on the basis of experiences and capabilities. Additionally, NRC has established expectations and standards for recruiters; however, after NORU, NRC is not afforded the opportunity to ensure that its standards are maintained throughout the recruiting fleet over time.

b. *Recommendation*

NRC should consider implementing RRT on PSS skill. Since learning is a complex concept, with several important components, it is important that training be supplemented in several ways to achieve the following: increase recruiter motivation, measure training and production separately, and provide the opportunity for recruiters to reinforce their skills while receiving effective feedback. Training should be provided consistently throughout a recruiter's tour and should be standardized at the NRC level. Refresher training can be used to supplement on-the-job training that recruiters already receive and to ensure all topics are thoroughly covered to NRC's standards, not the individual standards of the trainer.

Perhaps the most important facet of any continued training is the importance assigned to it by recruiters. The motivational theories discussed previously all stipulate that the goal of any such training should be seen as important by the trainee. If training is not specifically identified as critical in the path to success, recruiters will not accept the value of training. NRC should make it perfectly clear to the recruiting community that training is vital, and it should be treated by NRC as a high priority in all ways visible to recruiters. Subsequently, each district and station should echo that sentiment on a daily basis. Training should be treated as akin to production in significance, and that message needs to be generated from the top.

PQS in its current form is a solid foundation for recruiters who are learning their craft. Nevertheless, the actual qualification should consist of more than a straightforward board. All advanced recruiter PQS boards should include a sales lab and an exam with someone outside of the sailor's chain of command. Failure to pass either of these requirements should lead to automatic failure, since both knowledge and ability are

equally important to a recruiter's success. Additionally, recruiters should spend at least a day outside of their own station, under a different LPO and DLCPO, to observe the operations of a different station. A recruiter can spend three years inside the same station with the same co-workers. Recruiters can learn much from others who are outside of their normal working environment. During these visits, recruiters can be given a sales lab by either the LPO or DLCPO. Sales labs can be a powerful tool for learning, and performing this lab with someone outside of the recruiter's daily routine can provide added perspective and useful feedback. The standardization of recruiting knowledge and skill is critical to the continued success of recruiters. Standardization allows for interchangeability of recruiters in districts and stations, and would improve the overall ability of leaders to provide feedback and identify training gaps. On-the-job training is closer to the standards established by NRC instead of the individual standards of station and division leadership. Additionally, NRC can maintain the standards of skill and knowledge from NORU, increasing the value of initial training.

2. How Could RRT Be Executed?

a. Conclusion

Unlike the original RRT, refresher training does not have to be a week-long process. One week of training placed in the middle of a tour would suffer from the same information degradation as the original training. Refresher training does not have to be as time-intensive as original training (Hurlock & Montague, 1980). It would also be more effective if the relearning environment were similar to the original learning environment (Hurlock & Montague, 1980). In the case of refresher training for recruiters, it could be argued that the station is the best place to present such training, since this is where the reinforced material was learned and the skills to be refreshed are applied recruiting skills. While NORU provides the original training, most of the conversion of knowledge to skill generally occurs within the station. The original course at NORU in Pensacola Florida consists of approximately thirty hours of PSS training

(Student Guide for Enlisted Navy Recruiting Orientation/ Recruiter Canvasser, 2011). In optimal conditions, refresher training would constitute a fraction of the original training time.

The most important aspect of refresher training is that it be executed consistently. As seen in the "forgetting curve," forgetting can occur rapidly without reinforcement (Srivastava, 2006). Consequently, while refresher training would not encompass a great deal of time, it is important that it be done frequently. NORU breaks PSS into eight separate lessons, ranging from 1 hour to 2.5 hours in duration (Student Guide for Enlisted Navy Recruiting Orientation/Recruiter Canvasser, 2011). The integrity of the training blocks can be maintained in refresher training, which would help refresher training to simulate and better support original training.

Feedback is also a critical aspect of any training, original or refresher (Hurlock and Montague, 1980). Training must be provided in a way where feedback is immediate and effective. Training should thus be interactive and give the learner the opportunity to demonstrate the trained skill. Having someone available who is capable of providing useful feedback would reinforce the recruiter's ability to learn and address any learning gaps or misunderstandings.

NRC already utilizes Webinars, which could also be a great asset in refresher training. NRC publishes a list of all Webinars and available training courses, such as "Recruiter Advanced PQS Std 7-Prospecting" or " Recruiter Advanced PQS Std 5-Professional Selling Skills (PSS)" (N7 Webinar Catalog, 2010). Each district can choose the most applicable courses to address any training concerns. Training topics are provided, either at the request of the district or required by NRC. Attendance of training is taken at the beginning of training and then reported to NRC and the chain of command (A. H.. Beaster, personal communication February 10, 2012). Webinars are not individually tailored; normally, a station signs into a Webinar and completes the training as a group. No follow-up requirements are imposed outside of attending the Webinar.

b. *Recommendation:*

NRC should consider providing Webinars in conjunction with a specific role-playing scenario to reinforce and refresh PSS skills and knowledge. NRC should offer consistent refresher training. However, a Webinar is not comprehensive enough to support all the needs of the learner. RRT should consist of the learning phase, the rehearsal phase, and the demonstration phase. Command support is required to stress the importance of doing this training completely.

Webinars would be scheduled by NRC, and each district would be provided with a schedule of refresher training. Interaction during the Webinar is critical to allow recruiters to be involved in the learning process, ask questions as needed, and respond to questions. Training should be staggered for stations to facilitate a manageable learning environment. The original eight blocks can be combined for two to four separate lessons instead of eight different training curricula. Interaction would be required, and all stations would need to be involved during the training. This requirement would prevent recruiters from logging in and then ignoring the training.

After the lesson is completed, recruiters should be provided several scenarios that utilize the skills reviewed in the training. This reinforcement would be a critical piece of the training. Review and response to the given scenarios satisfies the requirements for the rehearsal phase. These role-playing scenarios can be conducted between recruiters, as everyone would have completed the same training. This would allow each recruiter to support or correct the other role-playing recruiter, which would add a measure of fun, feedback, and more reinforcement to the training

Finally, the recruiter should have the opportunity to role-play a different scenario with someone in his or her chain of command, preferably the LCPO. This would provide recruiters with the opportunity to demonstrate their skills and receive feedback from someone with more experience and knowledge. The LCPO would be able to provide feedback with more depth than the recruiter likely received during the rehearsal phase. Based on the role-playing in both the rehearsal and demonstration phases, a

recruiter may go through as many as four scenarios, further applying and supporting the skills a recruiter just refreshed during the Webinar.

A good asset to support both the rehearsal phase and demonstration phase could be the Navy Recruiting Simulation Tool (NRST). While the NRST does not have the capability to present pre-determined scenarios on demand, it could greatly support the refresher training process. NRST is a solid simulator that could reinforce specific lessons, while removing a great deal of subjectivity in the feedback. There should also be a real person on hand to catch things the NRST is not capable of identifying and provide feedback. Yet, for most common issues, NRST gives accurate feedback immediately.

Command support and emphasis on training would influence the recruiters' response to the time commitment required to complete the training. The importance of a solid foundation of learning should be impressed upon recruiters. The schedule for RRT should be respected and training should not be sidestepped or disregarded for day-to-day operations. Completing this training should be viewed and treated as important by recruiting leaders, so it would likewise be valued by the sailors working for them. Clearly, strengthening the training continuum for recruiters would have long-term positive effects, supporting these recruiters in achieving success throughout their tour.

3. What Role Could Incentives Play in a Recruiter Training Continuum?

a. Conclusion

Incentives can help to motivate recruiters, as experience shows. If recruiters believe they will earn something of value through their success, they will be more motivated to achieve their goals. This understanding of the connection between incentives and motivation is apparent in the current Freeman Plan. Research by Asch (1990), for example, found that recruiters were motivated to meeting recruiting goals because they were properly incentivized. As learning, motivation, and incentives are interlinked, it is important that incentives be used to reinforce the importance of training.

Similar to recruiting production, recruiters should not earn awards for meeting a minimal requirement; they should have to strive to achieve something above the basic standard. Incentives in training should reflect the same level of extra effort in training. As discussed previously, the RRT could include a Webinar and role-playing to buttress and demonstrate learning at the local level. To earn recognition, recruiters should achieve a mastery level for PSS. The importance of training should be recognized, and those who dedicate themselves to truly learning the skill of recruiting should be rewarded through incentives. The expected result would be a better-trained sailor who can ultimately become a more productive recruiter.

b. Recommendation

In accordance with Bloom's taxonomy, when learners have mastered a skill, they are able to create a unique scenario based on the skills they have learned (Anderson & Krathwhohl, 2001). Based on this definition, the capstone course should be a scenario that the recruiter creates, yet conducted with the NRC department. While the recruiter can develop the outline of the scenario, the subjectivity of the "prospective applicant" would challenge their skills. The final quiz could be administered at a random time. Passing this final requirement would prove mastery of PSS.

Completing this capstone requirement should be incentivized at every level: NRDs should strive to boost their "Recruiter Mastery" percentage; stations should strive to be manned with "Recruiter Masters"; and recruiters should strive to be recognized individually for their extra efforts. ERIS points would likely not motivate a recruiter sufficiently since this can only be achieved one time. On the other hand, a Flag Letter of Commendation could provide motivation, since it earns a recruiter advancement points and it is also a form of individual recognition.

C. FUTURE RESEARCH

Recruiting is a unique and invaluable job within the Navy. It is important that research be conducted to allow for continuous improvement in the recruiting training and practices. Training is the cornerstone for recruiting success; therefore, additional research into recruiter training and ability is invaluable to avoid missing critical recruiting goals.

1.   **Conduct Further Research to Evaluate How Much Training Is Being Retained**

This analysis is based on the theoretical constructs of learning, motivation, and forgetting. Quantitative data are needed to support the findings presented. To understand how much information is lost, it is important to measure the amount of learning initially gained at NORU. Once a baseline of knowledge is established, the knowledge lost and maintained can be measured throughout a recruiter's tour. A longitudinal study could be conducted following recruiters throughout their recruiting time. Learning, abilities, and utilization, will vary throughout the tour based on skill utilization, motivation, and goals. A strong understanding of these trends can assist in identifying an appropriate refresher training schedule and duration. If a measurement can be effectively established for recruiting skill and knowledge, the attributes of a successful recruiter can be better defined. Measurement of recruiting skills can allow for more individualized and effective training.

Analysis on recruiter's thoughts, opinions, and feedback on training and motivation would be very useful. No one knows the recruiting strengths and weaknesses better than the recruiters do, so their inputs are critical to understanding what actually motivates and leads a recruiter to success. While the Joint Advertising and Market Survey (JAMRS) group does a "Quality of Life Survey," it is still not able to capture the reason recruiters seem dissatisfied with recruiting, and why there is a difference based on region (2010). Answers to these questions will go a long way in improving the recruiting experience and supporting the recruiters.

2.   **Examine the Possible Modification of NRST to Support Emergent Training Requirements**

Simulation training has proven to be very effective. NRST is an established tool to conduct training, but with increased visibility, it could have a stronger impact on increasing or maintaining recruiter skill. It is underutilized in the fleet to support skill retention for recruiters. The policies for NRST usage should be analyzed. The value of the NRST should be emphasized to the recruiting fleet. The NRST could be utilized in the training continuum, including the monthly training requirements and the PQS tasks.

NRST could be utilized as a support tool the N7 inspection team, as a supplemental test for boards, or as a remedial trainer. If NRST could be modified to grade Sales Labs and report that information to the appropriate trainer, it could identify those proven areas of weakness. Additionally, as mentioned previously, it could also provide a specific role-playing scenario to reinforce Webinar training. The inclusion of the NRST in the training pipeline would reduce subjectivity of training, provide effective and real-time feedback, and provide training at the convenience of the learner.

3.   Analyze the Training Continuum for Other Services' Recruiters

All four services and the Coast Guard rely on their recruiters to build their force. Therefore, a distinct group of people within the five branches has similar skill sets, yet the learning paths may be distinct. A comprehensive comparison of their training, their sales programs, and their skills maintenance could provide a depot of best practices and lessons learned. Based on the merging of information, it might be possible to build a better training continuum that can be utilized interchangeably throughout all the services. This would allow cross-training and cross-support by recruiters from different services that are normally based in the same office area.

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